

**VISITING THE LIVING MUSEUM:
BRAZILIAN ROOTS TOURISM PERFORMANCE AND THE EMANCIPATORY
POSSIBLE**

by

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This dissertation focuses on the intersection of Latin American studies, tourism, and performance in the northeastern state of Bahia, Brazil. I examine the generative outcomes associated with Brazilian roots tourism performance. Brazil is a unique case in the study of roots tourism –travel undertaken in order to connect with identity based on origin or homeland— because members of the African diaspora travel there to connect with their African identity, even if their ancestry is not Brazilian. The northeastern state of Bahia is considered to be a “Black Mecca” or “Black Rome,” because it is promoted by tourism agencies as the most Afro-centric place in the hemisphere. Roots tourism to Brazil, especially by US-African-Americans, has been implicated in the perpetuation of essentializing notions of Black-ness / African-ness. My argument is that even though hemispheric hegemonic relationships cannot be undone through transnational travel alone, performance, with its slipperiness, provides enough wiggle room and cultural agency to possibly provide emancipatory experiences for some or all of the participants within the scenario of a tourism encounter. The emancipatory possible is my term for utopian possibilities as a result of engaging in roots tourism. This argument is explored through two case studies based on performance ethnography fieldwork in Bahia during the summer of 2016. The first case study features a group of US-African-American young women on a trip of empowerment and self-discovery to the city of Salvador. The second case study features the renown *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), a public festival sponsored by the Sisterhood of Good Death –a Catholic lay organization

of Afro-Brazilian women of advanced years— in the town of Cachoeira. An exploration of the staged authenticity of tourism encounters and the implications of digital ethnography and storytelling are also examined in relation to the emancipatory possible. This project promotes the idea that the emancipatory possible exists on a spectrum and thus it can be increased through the deployment of strategies such as: making staged authenticity visible, engaging as deeply as possible in a porous event, and having that engagement be through body-kinesthetic means.

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To Lisa, *sin su ayuda personas como yo no llegamos*.

To Julio, *este logro es suyo también. Cuando te necesitaba, siempre estabas allí. Siempre*.

To Margarita, *¡termine! Yayyyyy.....*

To Maicol, *la vida bro, si o que?*

To Isla and Aiden, *todo lo que hago, lo hago por ustedes. Siempre sean humildes y amables*.

To Amelia, *nadie sabe los sacrificios que has hecho por mí y por nosotros. Lo sé y lo veo. Y te lo agradezco, mi virtuosa esposa. Mis sueños ahora son nuestros sueños, y me has ayudado a lograr este. Gracias mi amor*.

ANTES DE COMEÇAR (BEFORE WE BEGIN)

To start this dissertation off right, we cannot jump right into it. This would only invite an injury –a sprained ankle, pulled ligament, or eye-strain (from reading); ain’t nobody got time for that. So, with deliberate care and purposeful attention, let us warm up by taking a look at some *capoeira* lyrics. This song was written by *Mestre Acordeon*, a Bahian native who emigrated to the United States from Brazil in 1979.¹ He is a master *capoeirista*, internationally renowned author, musician, and film producer. The song below is called “*Jogo Perigoso*” (“Dangerous Game”). From these lyrics, I will tell you why this song inspired in me as I wrote this dissertation. I will also point out what we cannot see or feel in my writing, what was not included in great detail, and what the topics examined in the following chapters have in common with the dangerous game. The lyrics are:

*Jogo Perigoso*²

mandinga nesse jogo, meu camara

esse jogo e de matar

mandinga nesse jogo, meu camara

esse jogo e de matar

Olha o jogo perigoso

esse jogo e de matar

Na madrugada vai Joao

Trabalhando na lavoura, pe no chao

Cavando e capinando sem parar

Procurando da terra arrancar

A comida dos filhos que de fome

*Dangerous Game*³

There’s magic in this game, my friend

That game is a killer

There’s magic in this game, my friend

That game is a killer

Watch the dangerous game

That game is a killer

At dawn, John goes out

Working in the fields, on the ground

Digging and weeding without stopping

Searching the land to extract

The food of the children who are hungry

¹ *Mestra Acordeon* is the *capoeira* moniker of Bira Almeida. All *capoeiristas* receive their *capoeira* name upon reaching a specific level of proficiency when they are “baptized” by their instructors.

² Mestre Acordeon. 2009. “*Jogo Perigoso*.” CD: *Eh Capoeira*. California: Panda Digital. Track 12.

³ Translated by Diego Villada

*Barriga inchada barro comem
e tudo isso porque, Pergunto Senhor*

mandinga nesse jogo, meu camara

esse jogo e de matar

Olha o jogo perigoso

esse jogo e de matar

*La noite escura esta Maria
Andando pelas ruas d'agonia
Se vende pelo pao pra matar fome
Dos filhos que quase nao comem
Que gemem que choram baixinho
Que pouco conhecem de carinho*

Tudo isso porque, Pergunto Senhor

mandinga nesse jogo, meu camara

esse jogo e de matar

Olha o jogo perigoso

esse jogo e de matar

Swollen tummy, eating clay
and all this because [?], I ask Lord

There's magic in this game, my friend

That game is a killer

Watch the dangerous game

That game is a killer

In the dark night, Mary is
Walking the streets of agony
Selling herself for the bread to kill hunger
Of the children who almost do not eat
Who moan and cry softly
What little they know of affection

All this because [?], I ask Lord

There's magic in this game, my friend

That game is a killer

Watch the dangerous game

That game is a killer

Let's start with the fact that this a *capoeira* song and it speaks of a *jogo* (game). *Capoeira* is an Afro-Brazilian martial-dance; a hybrid art form that cannot be classified exactly as only martial art or dance because it is "both and...". That is the nature of almost everything you will encounter in this dissertation: Afro-Brazilian customs and art forms that can be approached from a multitude of vectors because they are not strictly one thing ever; these art forms are always many things simultaneously.

The *jogo* or game of *capoeira* happens when two practitioners engage in front the instrument called *berimbau* and begin to "fight" by engaging each other in the *roda* (circle) at the insistence of the *berimbau*'s rhythm. In the *roda* (circle) there is an intimate connection between the circle's participants (singing at the edges of the circle), the musicians (playing *berimbau* and percussive instruments), the instruments themselves, and the two players in the game. None of which could be possibly discerned from solely the lyrics above. I have tried my best to engage

with multiple meanings and translate the visceral and kinesthetic to you through my writing. But please note that not all movement and meaning can be captured in words, there are by necessity some aspects that are not here. This doesn't stop us from engaging, examining, analyzing, inferring, etc. But to not say it, would not be honest. Note as well, the use of "you," "we," "us," and "them." These are unusual in academic writing, yet they will play a prominent role in this work, because I am not writing to you, I am speaking and moving at/with you. This familiar tone is sprinkled throughout, distributed amongst passages that fit the more academic mold required by a project submitted "in partial fulfilment" of a doctoral degree.

In the song above, "Dangerous Game," I have underlined "this" and "that" in the first two lines. A difference exists between "this" game and "that" game. In *this* game there is magic; whereas in *that* game there is death –since *that* game "is a killer." Given that this song is being sung communally by the *capoeiristas* –practitioners of *capoeira*— while in the *roda* (circle), I see the difference between "this" game and "that" game as the difference between *inside* the circle and *outside* the circle. The game in the *roda* (circle) is for *capoeiristas*; the game outside the circle is for society. The game the *capoeiristas* are playing has magic in it. The game outside of their circle is death, it is a killer game. Society is a killer. The *capoeiristas* singing know their *roda* (circle) is temporary, because they are part of society in everyday life. But for this brief moment they can sing their truth and be free in their bodies as they move and "fight" with each other –respectfully and honorably as the rules of their *inside* game demand. They are in fact, not fighting at all, they are being free together, before they must return to the killer game.

They are able to be free in this moment because they are not calling the killer game out for what it is, explicitly. The *capoeiristas* could easily be singing about the two individuals throwing kicks and head attacks, attempting to take each other's balance or land an unseen blow. For the

uninitiated, these attacks could be the “killer game” being referenced. I assert that that ambiguity is what lets the *capoeiristas* get away with calling out the society’s game: a killer game. Why would it be a killer game? The two verses with the characters of John and Mary tell us what we need to know to answer that question. John is a field laborer who cannot feed his kids, Mary is forced to sell herself to buy bread for her kids; in both cases their labor is not enough to live. The game they are playing is thus a killer game.

I was greatly inspired by these lyrics because even though the *outside* (“that”) game is dangerous, that does not stop the *capoeiristas* from continuing their *inside* (“this”) game. I am also inspired by the implied identities of the characters and *capoeiristas*. In an Afro-Brazilian martial-dance, characters that labor and are marginalized are likely Afro-descendant; victims of the legacies of racism in this hemisphere. Yet, the *capoeiristas* differ from the characters because they are engaging in self-liberating practices, I would describe as utopian or emancipatory. The “magic” that “this” game offers is the chance to, for a small moment (or in small increments), be free from the killer game that society offers to those in the margins.

This is what inspired me about this song and where I saw great overlap in topics of “Dangerous Game” and “this” dissertation. I invite you to be in “this” game with me as we examine Brazilian roots tourism performance from *inside* the *roda*. Words in Portuguese will be italicized, so will English words with *emphasis*. Portuguese words will usually be followed by my translation in parenthesis. The parenthesis will remain after the first mention, in direct defiance of traditional writing conventions; because, after all, I am not writing these words, I am speaking them to you and they just happen to be on a page. Note that all these conventions I have just set up will change for chapter three, I will be sure to give you sufficient notice by alluding to the changes during the *intermissão* (intermission). That is enough of a warm up. Let’s begin.

0.0 *INTRODUÇÃO* (INTRODUCTION)

0.1 GET TO KNOW ME AS AN ARTIST-SCHOLAR

0.1.1 How I write and what I choose to write about

I write about Latin America (including the Caribbean) as a source of knowledge production and as a geographic area from which I choose my sites of analysis. I not only want to have more examples from this geography in what US students and researchers have available for their own projects, but to explore Latin American lived experiences as a source for knowledge production, that is to say, using performance to theorize from the south.

I choose to write about marginalized people. I do this in an effort to create knowledge in the way that Patricia Hill Collins espouses in her book *Intellectual Activism*. Specifically, I am referring to two elements of intellectual activism: 1) speaking truth to power, and 2) speaking truth to people.⁴ Speaking truth to power is my work inside of the academy through my interaction with students, the shows that I direct or produce, and the knowledge that I create through writing (such as this dissertation). When speaking truth to people, accessibility is what it's all about for me. Knowledge does not belong solely to those privileged enough to work on college campuses. I

⁴ Patricia Hills Collins. 2013. *On Intellectual Activism*. xx-xxii, 24-26.

choose to write inclusively and performatively in the hopes that my audience will benefit from my research and feel that they are part of my *roda* (circle) as a fellow artist-scholar.⁵ I address circles later in chapter two when I examine the Afro-Brazilian martial-dance of *capoeira*, but for now suffice it to say that by being in my circle, you (the reader) and I (the writer) are on the same level.⁶ I am not above you simply by virtue of having the power, privilege, and opportunity to travel internationally (for my fieldwork) or because I am accepted in the academy. This way of performative writing is my attempt to make my work relational, evocative, embodied, and consequential.⁷ Performative writing is relational because of generosity; I extend myself to my readers because I want them to “take in my words.”⁸ Performative writing is evocative because it is a “dialogic endeavor” that seeks to lift words from the page to more “sensuous awareness;” it is “imagination and actuality,” “poetry in reportage,” as well as “critical analysis and literary pleasure.”⁹ Performative writing is embodied because it is the recognition that the body writes; bodily sensation as body knowledge comprises “interpretive meanings and impressions.”¹⁰ Performative writing is consequential because it deploys performance as a contested concept that breaks with normative traditions; it is useful because it “embraces political struggle and is not ashamed of its politics of advocacy.”¹¹ My work is not only for the academic, even if that is who will mostly read these words. My work is for the arts administrator, for the part-time artist, for the

⁵ Soyini Madison. 2005. *Critical Ethnography*. 191-199.

My use of the term “Performatively” refers to “performative writing,” as explained by Soyini Madison. Madison builds her performative writing models out of Della Pollock’s 1998 essay “Performing Writing.”

⁶ Bira Almeida. 1986. *Capoeira, A Brazilian Art Form: History, Philosophy, and Practice*. 68.

“The energy shared among *capoeiristas* inside the *roda* and the people clapping and singing around the circle is continuous and intense.”

⁷ Madison. 2005. 192.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 192.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 195.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 197.

theater volunteer, for the interested lay-person, for the socially conscious activist, and for professionals in other fields that seek to engage with performance. Performance is *doing* and so is performative writing.¹² If these words and ideas do what I intend for them to do, they will be useful in syllabus creation, talk-back preparation, pedagogy-circle facilitation, and the myriad of other actual (on-the-ground) real world interactions between people and arts.

When I write about performance, I do so from my experience as a professional theater artist in the area of movement, examining how performers on the stage and non-performers in their everyday life present themselves and move, thus telling a story. In humanities scholarship the presence of these bodies (doing) is needed. Why? Because performance offers a way of knowing, when it is considered alongside the cultural practices that ensconce it.¹³ Within the field of performance studies, Diana Taylor writes about the inclusion of the repertoire alongside the archive.¹⁴ For me, the repertoire is all about what happened on the ground: what was observable, what others described their experience to be, what can be guessed at and/or inferred, what was said during interactions, all combined with my own thoughts and feelings related to a tourism event or encounter. A tourism *event* is the performance (or happening) in a scenario designated as “tourism.” A tourism *encounter* is the moment(s) where tourists (as audience) and artistic producers (as creators/offerors; also called “hosts” in tourism scenarios), meet with tangible or intangible performance/heritage. Tangible heritage are items that you can see and touch beyond the moment that they are presented, such as sculpture or heritage artifacts in a museum that have physical form. Intangible heritage are performance examples thought of as “ephemeral.” Note that

¹² Diana Taylor. 2016. *Performance*. 7, 200-208.

¹³ Diana Taylor. 2003. *The Archive and the Repertoire*. 2-4.

¹⁴ Ibid., 19. “the *archive* of supposedly enduring materials (i.e., texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the so-called ephemeral *repertoire* of embodied practice/knowledge (i.e., spoken language, dance, sports, ritual).”

in my work I do not conceive of intangible heritage performance as separating tourist and hosts. I see these events as bringing the two groups together in that moment. These lines of delineation are simply general definitions in order to orient you. I must note that these lines blur, shift, and change with as much ephemerality as the moments of performance they describe: here right now (in the moment), then gone into “ether” moments later. All that remains of those blurred lines and “in the moments” are the resonances of the transfers that took place and can affect the lived experiences of the human beings present (and involved in that encounter) for an undetermined amount of time afterwards.

0.1.2 What drew me to tourism

Tourism performance can convey a great many messages in ways that other kinds of performance cannot. Acts of transfer abound within tourism encounters.¹⁵ These shows and experiences project and construct specific regional identity components and a specific kind of authenticity. These performances tell the story of a place and people and are good enough for some tourists in terms of depth, while simultaneously not being enough for other tourists. The latter are the tourists I write about in this dissertation. In terms of tourism, I am drawn to performances of folklore and heritage —what the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) calls “intangible cultural heritage” or “patrimony of humanity.”¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid. 24-27. “Performances operate as vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, and a sense of identity through reiterated actions.”

Diana Taylor. 2008. “Performance and Intangible Cultural Heritage.” *The Cambridge Companion to Performance Studies*. 91-104.

¹⁶ UNESCO’s Intangible heritage website: “The term ‘cultural heritage’ has changed content considerably in recent decades, partially owing to the instruments developed by UNESCO. Cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on

One reason why I have chosen tourism as an area of study is that tourism audiences are mostly self-selecting. Travel and the tourist gaze places transnational tourists in a unique position as audience members for the consumption of performances related to regional identity. Even as that is true, that does not presuppose that all tourists are interested in heritage or folkloric performances, or any performances at all. Some tourists are interested in “fun and sun” tourism, looking for Bahia’s plentiful beach and water diversions. Other tourists may only go to Bahia to partake of the sexual exploitation economy and the accessibility into that world that the exchange rate and the label of “foreigner” affords them.

The kind of tourism that I’ve chosen as the subjects for this dissertation exist within tourism’s subgenre of ethnic tourism. Roots tourism (an offshoot of ethnic tourism) connects the individual tourist to the geography they travel to. This interest on their part is more than curiosity or happenstance. Roots tourists choose locations to explore based on a connection they feel exists between that place and who they are. Therefore, as consumers and audience members of performance they are uniquely situated to encounter the emancipatory possible and benefit from that encounter. The emancipatory possible is my term for utopian possibilities as a result of engaging in roots tourism.

to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.

While fragile, intangible cultural heritage is an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization. An understanding of the intangible cultural heritage of different communities helps with intercultural dialogue, and encourages mutual respect for other ways of life.

The importance of intangible cultural heritage is not the cultural manifestation itself but rather the wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted through it from one generation to the next. The social and economic value of this transmission of knowledge is relevant for minority groups and for mainstream social groups within a State, and is as important for developing States as for developed ones.”

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003>

0.1.3 Embracing political struggle and not being ashamed of advocacy

Wiggle room matters to me. Spanish language scholar Doris Sommer writes about wiggle room in relation to cultural agency.¹⁷ Cultural agency is a range of creative activities that contribute to the arts, pedagogy, activism, and society. Cultural agency, and the wiggle room that allows for it, is manifested in smaller foci of reform. It is the gaining of small ground by marginalized people in hegemonic arrangements. Throughout the Americas “no one asks what cultural agency [is or] means.”¹⁸ It is an academic term used by Sommer in order to identify something that already exists. She argues that agency is enabled by culture. Sommer uses the example of Antanas Mockus (Bogotá, Colombia’s mayor in the mid-1990s and early 2000s) to identify one iteration of what cultural agency could be. Mockus, an unconventional politician, deployed performance in his city-wide initiatives to lower violence and increase *convivencia* (coexistence), his term for peaceful citizenship. He hired mimes to create humorous spectacles at traffic lights in order to encourage the use of crosswalks; he staged “vaccinations” against violence at theatricalized events where citizens received make-believe vaccinations in toy syringes; and he instituted a flash card system for drivers with literal thumbs-up or thumbs-down printed on them in order to reduce instances of road rage or transport related violence. All of these initiatives that deployed performance made Mockus a controversial figure— but they worked. After his second term in office homicide rates were down by 65%, fewer people were killed in traffic accidents, and an increased number of citizens paid their taxes above and beyond what they owed.¹⁹ Wiggle room, for me, is the acknowledgment of gaining ground in hegemonic arrangements as a worthwhile objective; it is the

¹⁷ Dorris Sommer. 2006. *Cultural Agency in the Americas*. 3-11.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2-4.

coaxing of concessions of more freedoms and resources for and with the marginalized. Similar to the contested practice of performance, with its innumerable permutations, so too is wiggle room difficult to pin down. In my own work wiggle room manifests itself in the attempt to never block from view the demonstrated agency of underprivileged people. As a person of color in the academy, I identify with the fact that “asymmetry is not news to the poor.”²⁰ When this is true, the challenge for the underprivileged is to make alliances that help them, even when equality doesn’t enter into the arrangement. Wiggle room, and its importance to my work, in production/rehearsal and in writing, is an acknowledgment of how I have been (and continue to be) on both sides of asymmetrical situations. That is the privilege my educational credentials have afforded me, in terms of being able to (at times) make the border porous between sides (in an asymmetrical situation). That realization only serves to fuel my commitment to finding wiggle room and creating cultural agency in my work as a public intellectual in the field of performance.

Within roots tourism encounters, I see a great possibility for wiggle room and change. I am doing what Tamara Underiner and Stephani Etheridge Woodson call for in *Theatre, Performance, and Change* when they ask, “What would happen if we made change strange?”²¹ This is a question that digs at the core of conditions that allow theatre and performance to offer robust answers to questions pertaining to “social justice,” “democratic equity,” and “human capability.”²² Change in roots tourism encounters, as a result of performance, can be social change, intellectual change, and/or personal-behavioral change, depending upon the individual tourist and the artistic producers (hosts) they encounter. Tourism, in this specific iteration, sets the stage for fundamental albeit

²⁰ Ibid., 9.

²¹ Stephani Etheridge Woodson and Tamara Underiner, eds. 2018. *Theatre, Performance, and Change*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. 1-2.

²² Ibid.

incremental change. This change is smaller in focus and at times imperceptible, yet it is what is alluded to when people speak positively of encountering “culture” of other places, different from where they live. This is especially true for marginalized people on both sides of the encounter. I’ve chosen to write about US-African American and Afro-Brazilian women, considered to be an underrepresented group in the halls of academic and political power of each respective nation. I’ve also chosen to write about young women in my first case study and older women in my second case study. Thus, this work not only lies at of the intersection of several academic disciplines (i.e., performance, tourism, and Brazilian studies), it also addresses, records, and infers about the lived experiences of intergenerational Afro-descendant women from a hemispheric perspective.

0.1.4 How the project found me

Aside from my personal curiosity about Brazil, due to my study of the language and culture, I was presented with the opportunity to travel and do field work there. I received several grants through my affiliation with the University of Pittsburgh (from various centers and departments). This led me to investigate Brazil as a potential source of academic sites of analysis, expanding my initial curiosity into summer independent field research. I combined my interests and curiosity in Brazilian performance forms such as *capoeira* –a Brazilian dance and fighting style—with topics I encountered in my reading such as: global perspectives on race and performance; transnational labor histories of the Americas and Caribbean; women of Africa and the African diaspora; hemispheric Islam(s); and embodying empire in the Atlantic.

My work with The Conciliation Project and relationship to Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates and Dr. Ram Bhagat (all of which I explain in further detail in chapters one and two), has not only informed my artistic production, it is also what put a potential trip to Brazil on my radar. In August

of 2012 I was invited to join a trip to Bahia entitled “The Color Line.” The goal of that trip was to travel with US-based artists and professors in order to experience Afro-Brazilian culture and find ways to incorporate those experiences into artistic projects and/or curriculum design. Due to professional obligations, I was not able to go. I was left with a feeling of unfinished business, and intellectual and artistic curiosity —a curiosity I was able to satiate when a second trip was being planned by Bhagat and Girls For A Change (discussed in chapter two), a Richmond-based young women’s empowerment non-profit. When this second trip came up, I was obliged to find the funding to travel and thereby secure my participation.

0.1.5 Goals for this project

The goals of my project are the following: to describe some of the Black tourism sites encountered on my two trips to Brazil during the summer of 2016 for my respective case studies. These Black tourism sites are part of what Patricia de Santana Pinho terms to be the “Map of Africanness.”²³ This map of Africanness is global in scale; my intervention is to place specific detailed points from a first-person account and critical analysis on this map. By connecting the organizations and tourism encounters that form the bulk of my two case studies, I am adding a more detailed account of some of the points in the constellation of Black tourism in our hemisphere as well as giving a more detailed experiential —from a corporeal focus— account of what interacting on the ground looks and feels like. Additionally, another one of my goals is to give insight into one specific type of roots tourists so as to complicate the idea that most African American roots tourists to Brazil are older, liberal, and people of means. In chapter two, I chose to

²³ Patricia de Santana Pinho. 2010. *Mama Africa: Reinventing Blackness in Bahia*. 53.

write about young US-African-American women traveling on a group trip and what happens at or during a tourism encounter between them and Afro Brazilian people and art forms. As I write about these extraordinary young women I'm identifying what happens at the encounter and how it relates to identity by way of acts of transfer in what I am calling the "emancipatory possible" –the generative possibility that performance creates during and within the context(s) of tourism encounters. In chapter three, my goal is to establish performance as the focus of a study on *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). I aim to establish older Black women at the center of this event in my descriptions and note the relationship of those women to the participation by tourists. Because of my impulse towards intellectual activism through the ideas of Hill Collins, I also aim to expand on how the emancipatory possible could be increased by producers of tourism encounters. In the fourth chapter, I relate the emancipatory possible to ideas of digital ethnography and digital storytelling.

Those are my explicit goals related to the argument I am putting forward. I have underlying goals as well. I aim to give readers, as artists-scholars, another way to use Diana Taylor's scenario theories of performance studies. I wish to give readers an example of how to apply and adapt practices of cultural ethnography and performance ethnography, as articulated by Norman K. Denon and Soyini Madison. I also wish to define the emancipatory possible as a term that extends beyond these two case studies to potentially include tourism performances globally. I write about these topics in order to expand known intersections between: tourism studies, intangible heritage (studies), Latin American studies, and performance studies.

0.1.6 Argument, archive, interventions

My argument is that even though hegemonic relationships cannot be undone through transnational travel, generative outcomes are possible.²⁴ Those generative outcomes are what I call the emancipatory possible. Even if the engagement by tourists is somewhat noncritical and based on the myth of Mama Africa (a false/essentialized notion of universal Black-ness, discussed further in chapters two and three), performance, participation in performance, and positive outcomes from that participation can be based on something other than historical truth. Empirical and falsifiable historical (and archival) research and critique are necessary but can never tell the full story (as archival [material] items supposedly resistant to change).²⁵ Such historical and sociological scholarship must be taken into account alongside/within lived experience and performance that also communicates knowledge (dance, music, ritual, social practice). Lived experience is at times based on myth and stories that are not completely true. Yet as any theater artist can attest the effects can be real enough, even when the audience is presented with “fiction.” It is up to the audience to bring of themselves to a performance. It is also up to an audience to decide how deeply they wish to engage with what is “on stage.” And finally, producers of performance cannot control what an audience walks away with. This is true for formal staged performances in a theater space (such as plays or dance concerts), as much as it is true for less formally presented encounters of performance within tourism (i.e., workshops or public festivals).

²⁴ Diana Taylor. 2008. “Performance and Intangible Cultural Heritage.” *The Cambridge Companion to Performance Studies*. 100-104. “Practitioners reaffirm their cultural identity and transmit a sense of community by engaging in these cultural behaviors. Outsiders glean some understanding of a community’s values and structure by being there, and participating or by relating modern-day performances to embodied practices that have been alluded to or described in other media (writing, etchings, engravings, and so on.”

²⁵ Ibid. 91.

The archive and repertoire I have chosen to mine for the examples in my case studies comes from my tourism field research completed in 2016. Having traveled to the geography of Brazil and engaged in performances of ethnic tourism in the state of Bahia, my two case studies, focusing on US-African-American tourists and a public festival deemed to be an example of African cultural survival, constitute a study of roots tourism. The evidence I use from within the chosen archive and repertoire are from interviews, historical and critical research, and the documentation of lived experience through ethnographic practice. My chosen archive, repertoire, and relevant evidence are not solely from written records. Rather, they also involve the forefronting of the body and the relationship of the body to space, geography, History, art engaged in, and the Other.²⁶ Thus my chosen archive is a deliberate combination of the “archive” and “repertoire” as espoused by Diana Taylor in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*.²⁷

My primary intervention is to shed light on one small area of the intersection of Latin American studies, tourism studies, area/ethnic/cultural studies, afro-diasporic studies, and performance studies. My two case studies exist alongside/within Patricia Pinho’s “Map of Africanness” and Anadelia Romo’s “Living Museum.”²⁸ I have based the title of this dissertation on Romo’s historical work that documents how Brazil’s Afro-descendant population shifted from

²⁶ Please note that there is a difference between history and History: history (lower case) is anything that has happened in the past—usually unrecorded. History (upper case) is the study and writing of the socially constructed narrative of the past that we know and have access to. Also, Other (upper case) is the recognition and actual engagement of the full subjectivity of the people I have met in field work; Others get to identify themselves, define their own reality, shape their own identity, name their history, and tell their story.

Ibid. 91-92. “Unlike the archive that houses documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archeological remains, bones, videos, films, compact disks—all those tangible items supposedly resistant to change—the acts that are repertoire can be passed on only through bodies. But while these acts are living practices, they none the less have a staying power that belies notions of ephemerality.”

Madison, D. Soyini. 2005. *Critical ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance*. 8-10. “I contend that *critical* ethnography is always a meeting of multiple sides in an encounter with and among Other(s), one in which negotiation and dialogue towards substantial and viable meanings that make a difference in the Other’s world.”

²⁷ Diana Taylor. *Archive and the Repertoire*. 2003.

²⁸ Anadelia Romo. 2010. *The Living Museum: Race Reform, and Tradition in Bahia*.
 Patricia de Santana Pinho. 2010. *Mama Africa: Reinventing Blackness in Bahia*.

being a source of embarrassment to being integral to Brazilian identity. The first case study, where I record and analyze experiences of young US-African-American women traveling to Bahia, documents specific points on the Map of Africanness with particular focus on acts of transfer within performance tourism encounters. My second case study where I traveled to Cachoeira, Bahia and experienced/participated in the renown *Festa de Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), takes a more in-depth view of what participating in that festival is like. Using my own performance background and ability to write about movement, I pair my experiences with a search for the emancipatory possible.

0.2 METHODS

My methodology is informed by the practices of “performance ethnography” and “critical ethnography.” Both are offshoots of ethnography, an anthropological research method, and both intersect with the study of performance or lived experience as performance. I draw upon the ideas and methods explained in *Performance Ethnography* by Norman K. Denzin and *Critical Ethnography* by Soyini Madison to create my case studies.²⁹ My ethnographic methodology can be described as “critical autoethnography.” Denzin asserts that,

The authors of autoethnographic performance texts use personal experience and memory as a point of departure for writing about things that matter in everyday life. Such texts allow writers to confront and interrogate the cultural logics of late capitalism...this writing form makes the social scientist accountable and vulnerable to the public. A new ethics of writing is advocated, an ethics of narrative that demands that writers put their empirical materials into forms that

²⁹ Denzin, Norman K. 2003. *Performance ethnography: Critical pedagogy and the politics of culture*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Madison, D. Soyini. 2005. *Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

readers can use in their own lives...These texts must also work as cultural criticism, tools for critique and political action.³⁰

Using Denzin as a foundation for my own work, I use personal experience and memory to write about performance encounters of tourism. Some are actual performances, some are performance interactions such as simulations and others are encounters studied through a lens of performance. What is important to note is that this way of writing autoethnography allows writers to, “confront and interrogate the cultural logics.” While I am not solely invested in a critique of late capitalism, I am invested in finding and making visible the “cultural logics” of hemispheric inequality, racial dimensions of tourism, and gendered narratives of history within tourism encounters. I am also advocating for the use of writing that, “demands that writers put their empirical materials into forms that readers can use in their own lives.” My “personal experience and memory” will be what makes visible that which needs to be critiqued in the cultural experiences of Bahian tourism.

To Denzin’s “autoethnography” I add Madison’s “critical ethnography.” Madison illustrates that,

We are not simply subjects, but we are subjects in dialogue with the Other. We understand that our subjectivity is an inherent part of research, but in critical ethnography it is not my *exclusive* experience—that is autobiography, travel writing, or memoir (or what some people call *autoethnography*). I contend that *critical* ethnography is always a meeting of multiple sides in an encounter with and among Other(s), one in which negotiation and dialogue toward substantial and viable meanings that make a difference in the Other’s world.³¹

For Madison, it is not enough to establish an ethical working rationality to your writing about the Other. The Other for Madison is the other culture, group, or individual you are presumably researching. Ethnographic positionality must always remain grounded in the world of the Other.

³⁰ Denzin, 137.

³¹ Madison, 9.

To foreground yourself in the place, time, and in relation to the people encountered is of the utmost importance, but ultimately incomplete. The critical ethnographer therefore, “is always a meeting of multiple sides in an encounter with and among Other(s).” Madison places this kind of critical ethnography in opposition to autoethnography. She described the latter as being akin to travel writing and memoir. I interpret this “travel writing” autoethnography as the kind of ethnography that Denzin is seeking to amend with his call to move the discipline toward a performance informed social science. I combine the work of Madison and Denzin to approach ethnography and performance from what I call a critical autoethnography stance. From Denzin, my methodology focuses on the ethics and politics of the writing. From Madison, as mentioned in the excerpt above, I hope to infuse my methodology with, “negotiation and dialogue toward substantial and viable meanings that make a difference in the Other’s world.”

All that being said, I am not an ethnographer or an anthropologist. I am a theatre artist and scholar who writes about performance. It is through this lens that I approach critical autoethnography as a methodology. I aim to use social science and the ethical deliberations about positionality in data collection, interpretation, and output, to understand performances better. This is why we can more accurately call my methodology: critical autoethnography of performance. In this way we establish that I as theatre artist am experiencing performance in the field, documenting, and then relating what occurred through the point of view of my positionality, while always keeping the Other in mind.

In addition to this way of taking in performances as a theatre artist-scholar who uses ethnographic techniques, I also want to add to the work of Denzin and Madison by bringing a performance scholar to bear on the method of interpretation of the data collected. After establishing, through critical autoethnography of performance writing, what occurred and how, I

will use the “scenario” technique that Diana Taylor demonstrates in *The Archive and the Repertoire*.³² This will allow me to historicize the tourism encounters as performances. Taylor’s scenario method can be broken down into six parts: 1) physical location, 2) embodiment of social actors, 3) the frame, 4) how it is passed on, 5) situating ourselves, and 6) past situations conjured up. I have chosen scenario specifically because I agree with Taylor that performance works to transmit social knowledge. Taylor calls this type of transmission “acts of transfer.”³³ As a theatre artist and performance scholar, my case studies will be examined as performances that enable acts of transfer. Using a critical autoethnography of performance I will detail the experiences and then I will analyze them using scenario in order to understand these performances better. It is my contention that by doing so I will be able to point to ways that those involved, the Other(s) that Madison writes about, can create new ways of being in the world by altering their performances slightly. I call the alteration and effects of such a change the emancipatory possible.

0.3 TERMINOLOGY

0.3.1 Performance, Black-ness, *Latinidade*, and other relevant terms

Because this project is heavily steeped in slippery terminology and interdisciplinary methodology that is as confusing as it is useful, I here dedicate significant text to definitions and explanations. It is necessary to understand exactly what kind of performance, tourism, Black-ness,

³² Taylor, Diana. 2003. *The archive and the repertoire: Performing cultural memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press.

³³ Ibid.

authenticity and identity is being referred to and when/how each of those relates to geographies, phenomena, historical arguments, and personal experiences. I will include a review of pertinent literature, as well. Further explorations of terminology are discussed in chapter one (i.e., Brazilian context of tourism, alternative forms of tourism, networks and Pan-Africanisms).

0.3.2 Emancipatory Possible

The emancipatory possible is one possibility for what can come about as a result of critical framing of a tourism encounter, simulation in participation, digital ethnography in conjunction with on-site tourism, or a combination of the three. It is my version of the “militant utopianism” promoted by Norman K. Denzin in *Performance Ethnography*.³⁴ Denzin explains:

Never have we had a greater need for a militant utopianism to help us imagine a world free of conflict, terror, and death. We need an oppositional performative social science, performance disciplines that will enable us to create oppositional utopian spaces, discourses, and experiences within our public institutions.³⁵

In my search for the emancipatory possible, I make visible my desire for a template to create those “oppositional utopian spaces.” Denzin advocates broadly for these spaces to exist within neighborhoods, theatres of experimentation, independent bookstores, and even wilderness areas in order for critical democratic culture to be nurtured. I both expand and delimit Denzin’s idea by moving his militant utopianism to touristic spaces in order to look for the emancipatory possible. By looking at tourism as performance, it opens up an additional space for the creation and maintenance of such utopianism. At the same time, I am limiting myself to one place and time:

³⁴ Denzin.

³⁵ Ibid., 7-8.

Bahia in the second decade of the twenty-first century. Specifically, I will base my performance ethnography work on case studies of two trips to Bahia during the summer of 2016.

My emancipatory possible, aside from expanding on Denzin's militant utopianism, supports the assertion that performance is world making. Diana Taylor in *Performance* writes,

As a practice, performance constitutes a means of communication, a doing, and a doing *with* and *to*. As an act of imagination, performance allows us to imagine better scenarios and futurities. Jose Esteban Munoz put it eloquently: 'Some will say that all we have are the pleasures of this moment, but we must never settle for that minimal transport; we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds.' **Performance is world making. We need to understand it.**³⁶

Taylor refers to the work of Muñoz from *Cruising Utopia*, where he advocates that performance is one way for queer futurity to not only exist but capable of being shaped for the better.³⁷ Taylor (through a performance studies lens) and Muñoz (through a performance of queerness lens) point to the relationship that performance has with what *can* and what *should* be. Imagination of "better scenarios and futurities" is what the emancipatory possible is attempting to do. Additionally, because performance is both a "doing *with* and *to*," it is my intention to have the emancipatory possible be a way of working, creating and engaging in tourism encounters, while at the same time alluding to the effects of creating new worlds. If performance is world making, as Taylor argues, then the emancipatory possible points to other ways of being in the world and attempts to understand the effects of the attempt by both producers and consumers of tourism to create these new worlds.

³⁶ Taylor, Diana. 2016. *Performance*. Durham. 207-208.

³⁷ Pablo Assumpção (from the Hemispheric Institute's www.emisferica.org) explains that Muñoz in *Cruising Utopia* argues that, "Far from conceptualizing queer collectivity as a political impossibility—as antirelational readings of queerness would have it—Muñoz argues that an analysis of how queer belonging is performed through aesthetic works actually reveals the political potentiality of queer futurity...Such excess/surplus is thus the historical, material archive from which Muñoz extracts a performance of futurity—a utopian function—from queer aesthetics: at once a negation of "what merely is" and a pointing to what could and should be."

The emancipatory possible is also embroiled in the awareness of utopia's limitations within performance. Ramón H. Rivera-Servera in *Performing Queer Latinidad* discloses,

I share [Jill] Dolan's enthusiasm for what performance can do. I always enter the scene of performance hopeful that such a moment as a utopian performative might happen. I retain vivid memories of those instances...[Yet] As much as I am inspired by the possibility of experiencing the utopian performative, I am also fully aware of its provisional state, even as I surrender to its seductive embrace.³⁸

Rivera-Servera is referencing Jill Dolan's idea of the "utopian performative." These are moments that allow us to experience and perhaps feel what the world should be.³⁹ Utopian performatives depend on heightened emotional states that, "initiates the imaginable into the possible."⁴⁰ Similar to Rivera-Servera, I too believe in what performance is capable of doing. His tempered enthusiasm is helpful, though, because it allows for a fuller picture that includes the unwieldy and unsexy parts of the stories being told. Such a way of envisioning utopia is one where the researcher is, "fully aware of the provisional state," of the utopian performative. This realistic utopian ideal that is simultaneously possible, just as it is fleeting and "provisional," is where my emancipatory possible comes into play. For the performances within the tourism encounters, the emancipatory possible is not a foregone conclusion; it is a possible way of presenting tourism. It is at the same time a possible way for the performance of tourism encounters to be received in order to create experiences that approach the utopian performative and potentially "initiate the imaginable into the possible." Yet, as hopeful as the emancipatory possible is as an approach and goal, it is also "provisional" and thus encourages being, "mindful of the need to attend to the tensions and

³⁸ Rivera-Servera, Ramón H. 2012. *Performing Queer Latinidade: Dance, Sexuality, Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 35-37.

³⁹ Dolan, Jill. 2005. *Utopia in performance: Finding hope at the theater*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

⁴⁰ Rivera-Servera, 35.

frictions that emerge within social spaces that are structured around difference and inequality,” as suggested by Rivera-Servera.⁴¹

0.3.3 Performance

The use of “performance” as a term, creative practice, lens, object of study and method of interpretation requires explanation. It is for this reason that every work of performance studies scholarship has to re-explain “twice behaved behavior” and the difference between, for example, key concepts, such as “performative speech acts” and “performative non-fixed gender identity.” The slipperiness that makes the discipline exciting to the performance researcher also requires that written output clarify what and how performance is being deployed.

For my study, performance has three modes of deployment (use). The first is the consumable product of tourism that presents shows or cultural performances. This can include folkloric ballets, music performances, etc. The second are instances where a tourist can engage not only as a spectator, but also as a participant, becoming a kind of actor-spectator hybrid. This is similar to the concept of “spect-actor” written about by Augusto Boal in *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* and that of “simming” written about by Scott Magelssen in *Simming*.⁴² What is important in my writing is that the line between consumer and performer during the performance

⁴¹ Ibid., 37

⁴² Boal, Augusto. 2002. *Games for actors and non-actors*. New York: Routledge. 28.

“In Forum Theatre at no time should an idea be imposed. Forum Theatre does not preach, it is not dogmatic, it does not seek to manipulate people. At best, it liberates the spect-actors. At best, it stimulates them. At best, it transforms them into actors. Actor – he or she who acts.”

Magelssen, Scott. 2014. *Simming: Participatory performance and the making of meaning*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 3

“Simulated, immersive, performative environments –*simming* for short (a term I have adapted from online gaming)—used theatre and performance in which participants played out scripted or improvised narrative in order to gain or produce understanding of a situation and its context.”

within the tourism encounter can be or has been blurred. This happens when tourists take a percussion class or practice *capoeira* with local teachers in Bahia. The third is the use of performance as a lens: the methodological deployment of theory to interpret and thus examine a site. An example of using performance as a lens would be my combination of Taylor's "scenario" with "performance ethnography" to examine tourism encounters in Bahia.

0.3.4 Digital Ethnography

Digital Ethnography focuses on the relation of digital media to cultural anthropology. The main question for scholars engaged in digital ethnography is: what is the role of the ethnographer in relation to digital self-representation (such as websites, blogs, social media)? Natalie Underberg and Elayne Zorn suggest that anthropologists should be translators of culture and not critics of it. Their book *Digital Ethnography* explains that this distinction is essential (to them) and that culture needs to be translated by those with the ability to be considered "cultural experts."⁴³

Underberg and Zorn's digital ethnography work is not quite as radical as the work of Denzin or Madison. Politically speaking they are opposed because *Digital Ethnography* espouses a non-critical stance. As simply translators and cultural experts, ethnographers of the digital kind are supposed to allow for communication between members and non-members of social groups. Yet, even in the description of what a digital ethnographer is supposed to do, responsibility is mentioned in representing a juxtaposition of multiple voices in the immersive digital experience. Underberg and Zorn's ethnographic methodology engages in a kind of softer radical stance. Digital

⁴³ Underberg, Natalie M., and Elayne Zorn. 2013. *Digital ethnography: Anthropology, narrative, and new media*. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press.

ethnography as explained in *Digital Ethnography* forefronts collaboration in the making of the digital experience (production) and also cultural sensitivity in gathering of the data. Additionally, digital ethnographers are supposed to include cultural elements (from their mastery in communication of culture) in the how the experience unfolds for the consumers of the content during the delivery of the cultural content.

Digital ethnography involves digital design and interactivity. The role of the digital ethnographer is to help communicate info to non-members about a field site they understand as “cultural experts.” Underberg & Zorn advocate that communication must be accomplished by understanding the field site (and the presentation mode), and then attempting communication between different groups to accomplish culturally responsible aims. Ethnographers on a digital media project also transform the very process of its creation, through an emphasis on collaborative partnerships.

0.3.5 Participatory Heritage and Digital Storytelling

According to Henriette Roued-Cunliffe and Andrea Copeland, participatory heritage is a space.⁴⁴ In this space, knowledge is shared and co-created. Individuals outside of formal institutions participate in cultural activities deemed to be heritage. Although individuals or groups engage with heritage they are not necessarily affiliated with official institutions which may be limited by policies and procedures or budgetary constraints. Participatory heritage collaboration groups care very little for specific mediums of communication or validated professional expertise. What my exploration of digital ethnography and participatory heritage sets up is the idea that the

⁴⁴ Roued-Cunliffe and Andrea Copeland. Eds. 2017. *Participatory Heritage*. London: Facet. xv-xxi.

content shared in digital environments is always contextually bound by how it was created, what ethical responsibilities were considered as far as the infrastructure, and who has control over the dissemination of the content after it has been created. All of these elements should be taken into consideration when attempting to increase the emancipatory possible. The story being told online should correspond with the values of the organization that is being referenced. Additionally, the infrastructure, i.e., the logistics, behind how digital content transitions from being archival material into being a digital heritage final-product that is user-friendly, should be related to the mission and values of the organization as well as the people who are the subjects of the content created. Finally, upon reaching the stage where users can interact with these digital stories (related to the heritage), they should be curated with a high level of autonomy by the group or people represented in the stories. Digital storytelling needs to be framed specifically by the questions raised by digital ethnographers and proponents of participatory heritage in order to be useful for the emancipatory possible. The main question for scholars engaged in digital ethnography is: what is the role of the ethnographer in relation to digital self-representation (such as websites, blogs, social media)? The reason is that digital storytelling is a field that is extremely expansive; digital storytelling is a broad tool that can be used in theater, performance, and education, as well as a myriad of other areas of artistic and scholarly endeavor. Brian Alexander's *New Digital Storytelling* envisions the field as the modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling.⁴⁵ This modern expression includes image, text, audio, video, music, and other emerging technologies. Alexander explains that digital storytelling manifests itself through narrative creation process with a personal video, social media, multimedia games, podcast, blogs, and many other forms of new media communication. Alexander

⁴⁵ Bryan Alexander. 2011. *The New Digital Storytelling: Creating Narratives with New Media*. Santa Barbara: Praeger. 3-16.

explains that in the simplest terms digital storytelling is the telling of stories with digital technologies.

0.3.6 Roots Tourism

Roots tourism is a kind of ethnic tourism. If ethnic tourism refers to a niche within tourism that offers a chance to encounter culture(s) different than your own, then roots tourism is an encounter with a culture that you (as a tourist) may identify with. Afro-descendant people that “travel to find their African roots, whether these be located on the African continent or in countries of the diaspora with large Black populations,” are one example of roots tourists.⁴⁶ These types of tourists, “seek knowledge about Black cultures of the diaspora and connections with Afro-descendants from other parts of the diaspora.”⁴⁷ Yet, they differ from other roots tourists in that Afro-descendant roots tourism is not bound by direct connection, but instead connected through solidarity of shared experience of seeking “African roots” even if it is outside of the African continent. This connects to my project in that the “roots” aspect of roots tourism is a constructed concept. Moreover, just because it is not completely authentic does not mean that fruitful outcomes cannot come about as a result of participation in this type of tourism. Roots tourism’s authenticity is staged, just as the tourism encounters that are a part of such tourism are staged. Yet, in that staging, performance with its slipperiness and wiggle room creates room and space for potential and possibility. That possibility can and does have an effect on identity, which I argue can be shaped so that the outcome is at least partially positive for those involved.

⁴⁶ de Santana Pinho. *Mama Africa*. 50

⁴⁷ Ibid., 51

0.3.7 Simming

The focus of Scott Magelssen's *Simming* is immersive simulation; immersive environments in which spectator-participants engage in simulations of various kinds: an ecopark in Mexico (tourists pretend to be illegal immigrants), a living history museum in Indiana (tourist pretend to be run-away slaves), and U.S. Army simulations of Iraq and Afghanistan (soldiers role-play for combat situations). His book argues that "simming," his term for play within immersive environments, can promote social change through affective, embodied testimony. He reports that *Simming*, and his scholarship in general, is informed by his values, body and subject position. Essentially simming is a kind role-playing. Magelssen adapted the term simming from online gaming. It is the use of theatre and performance strategies to stage environments in which participants play out scripted (or improvised) narratives. The goal of simming is for the participants to gain understanding about a situation and its context. Simming affords the producers of these immersive simulations the opportunity to reinforce their desired narratives (into visitor's experiences) through embodied practice. According to Magelssen, simulation educates, persuades, indoctrinates or transforms participants by exposing them to history and culture. The purpose of *Simming* thus is to examine this phenomenon. Magelssen is invested in the ways that simming promises (and can potentially accomplish) a different social change and efficacy than other forms of communication because of embodied practices.

Simming explains that simming can be used for "saving the world" just as easily as it can promote intense propaganda in "immersive baptisms" of the most impressionable among us (young people). Magelssen asks: what is the difference between simming and other performance? If performance is doing, then simming is kind of doing. In the kind of doing (performance) that simming is persons perform execution of an action with express intent of reference, not to show

the doing in actuality. Magelssen chooses to focus on live, three-dimensional immersive environments in which spectator-participants engage in intentional simulation of real or imagined society. During these events of simulations, all parties involved acknowledge that it is simulated. He devotes the case studies in *Simming* to simulations that have some component of pedagogy or change. Simming is therefore different from theatre or film, or even first-person video games. Magelssen asks: what is the participant's (spectator) role and agency in the coproduction of the narrative? Are the participants re-inscribing a hegemonic discourse? Or, are they co-creating discourse as invested stakeholders? Does simming then allow those participants to be empowered as a means to reach self-interested goals?

Magelssen says most participants know what they are in for. He explains that he is in favor of decentering institutional authority in the production of performance experiences offered in museums and classrooms. *Simming* does make it clear though that meanings can never be fully controlled, no matter who is in charge of the story. This is a byproduct of performance. What the audience walks away from the experience with cannot be fully controlled. Magelssen explains that meaning is created for both participants and spectators (observers, not participating). This part of his formulation draws on the work of Diana Taylor and her "acts of transfer" ideas. Although simming "is likenesses," it always maintains the difference between simulation and the reference (or real-life event). Building on the work of Dolan and Muñoz, Magelssen deploys the ideas of utopian performative —knowing this world and creating better versions— and futurity —bringing the not here yet into being—. Magelssen explains that it is possible to be revisionist of the past with simming and in doing so undo an unjust verdict of the written official Past. This is where the emancipatory possible can help tourism encounters to not only acknowledge injustices of the past

but also remake how those injustices are narrated, talked about, and given ways to be counteracted in the future, through embodied practices.

0.3.8 *Latinidade, Brasilidade, and Baianidade*

Latin-ness, Brazilian-ness, Bahian-ness are similar to the myth of Mama Africa. They are ways of describing (and essentializing) people, spaces, arts, and other human endeavors in an attempt to name and understand identity based on region, nation, or hemisphere. “-Ness” is what I’m calling this phenomenon. It is not necessarily based on fact, and it changes depending on where you are and what activities you are engaging in. -Ness in the examples of Latin-ness, Brazilian-ness, and Bahian-ness, refers to an identification with the region of Latin America, the nation state of Brazil, or the North Eastern Brazilian state of Bahia. “Latin American” is a term often set against another term: “Hispanic”; to be Latin American is similar, but different than being Hispanic. To be Hispanic you are from or associated with a country or origin that speaks the language of Spanish —this includes peninsular Spain. Latin American includes all Hispanic countries (minus Spain) and adds Brazil (as well as other South American countries where Spanish is not the predominant language). At times Latin America can include all or part of the Caribbean as well.

Designations such as these are complicated and fluid. An example of how colloquial speech and location can affect the meaning of these identity designations: in the United States someone may call themselves (or be called by others) “Spanish,” referring to their Latin American or Hispanic background. These individuals are rarely from the Kingdom of Spain, yet, because they are Latinx or Hispanic they are designated colloquially as “Spanish.” Less complicated, but no less fluid, Brazilian-ness and Bahian-ness mean different things depending on who, where, and when, you are. Meaning that what it means to be Brazilian, to own Brazil’s -Ness (Brazilian-ness), is

determined by a multitude of factors that include your own subject position, the place within Brazil you are from, and moment in time you are living in or writing about.

A good question to ask in relation to -Ness is: what are the unique centralized identifying factors of that place (some, or all of which may be historically inaccurate and /or possibility exclusionary or partly racist in construction and maintenance)? Given that I'm writing about Brazil in general, and Bahia I'm particular, the -Ness has to do with Afro-Brazilian identity. The project of unifying or creating unifying symbols of Brazilian identity are described as beginning with the dictatorship of Getulio Vargas. Beginning in the 1930s, Brazilian elites we're interested in disseminating an image of Brazil throughout the world as a Racial Paradise – a place where all races lived together in peace and harmony. In order to accomplish this goal, aspects of Afro-Brazilian life and culture were appropriated and promoted by the state as holding an intrinsic identity value to all Brazilians regardless of their race.⁴⁸ It is for this reason that Bahia is promoted as the birthplace of Brazil, the cradle of many Brazilian cultural forms. The -Ness of Bahia now includes the promotion of the geography as the place to go if you wish to see Africa's influence on Brazil. It is promoted as a place of African survival. Bahia's distinctiveness is therefore tied to simultaneously welcoming contemporary visiting tourists, while offering both fun and sun in a setting of traditional Afro-descendant culture.

Different from any other location in Latin America, Bahia is promoted as offering the contemporary amenities that transnational tourists crave, enveloped in an atmosphere of African tradition. That African tradition is thought of to be static, preserved somehow from the ravages of

⁴⁸ Gerard Taylor. 2007. *Capoeira: The Jogo de Angola from Luanda to Cyberspace*. 17-22.

Anadelia A. Romo. 2010. *The Living Museum: Race, Reform, and Tradition in Bahia*. 4-7.

Severino J Albuquerque and Katheryn Bishop-Sanches, eds. 2015. *Performing Brazil: Essays on Culture, Identity, and the Performing Arts*. 27.

time and forward progress of society. In Bahia, Black-ness and Africans are inextricably linked to the -Ness of that place. Yet it must be understood that this is a fallacy. That -Ness is, has been and continues to be constructed. It is presented and staged as singularly authentic. Similar to tourism itself and the encounters contained within tourism, -Ness is “authenticity” that is staged. Some things are said to be more Bahian than others. Some people are said to be more Bahian than others. -Ness is transferable, explainable, purchasable, and researchable.

My project has everything to do with -Ness, the -Ness of Bahia and Brazil encountered by the young women in case study number one. It is also involved in the -Ness presented by the most Afrocentric festival (colloquially explained) in the most Afrocentric/Traditional/African survival town (Cachoeira) of the most Afrocentric state of the entire country (Bahia). This festival is called *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death) and is examined in chapter three. When Brazilians travel throughout the world the -Ness associated with their country might be the famous Carnaval of Rio De Janeiro, the famous alcoholic drink *capirinha*, or the iconic figure of Carmen Miranda. Yet, when we zoom in on that -Ness, Brazil’s -Ness is actually made up of the -Ness of its distinct regions; one of those is Bahia. The -Ness of Bahia includes: the history of its development (socially and economically), the marginalization of Black people, the rise of the tourism industry, and the forefronting of African people and traditions as inseparable from Bahia.

While these essentialized notions are not true they affect the lives of the people that live there and those that travel there. Similar to the concept of race being “biologically” determined, which is not real or true. These ideas can still have an enormous amount of influence due to legacies of racism (institutional and individual); so too does -Ness exert an extraordinary amount of influence. It is that influence that this dissertation explores in connection with how roots tourists in my first case study seek Bahia’s -Ness in order to achieve the goal of the trip, which was to

develop the “goddesses” inside each of the young women. It is also the influence of that specific -
Ness that is explored in my second case study that investigates what it is like to participate in a
public festival deemed to have a high-value of Africanness, unique to Brazil, associated with it.

0.3.9 Staged Authenticity

Staged authenticity in tourism is a spectrum of tourist perception. Building on the work of Erving Goffman through Dean MacCannell, staged authenticity is the idea that there is a front and backstage to any tourism encounter.⁴⁹ The front stage is the public facing part: the people and elements that aren’t engaged directly by the audience of tourist(s). The backstage is the non-public facing (behind-the-scenes) part of the tourist experience. If everything a tourist encounters exists along a spectrum of staged authenticity (and it does), then where the encounter lies on that spectrum has to do with what any specific tourists deems to be more or less “authentic.” In tourism all authenticity is staged. Some of the factors that affect the level of staged authenticity might be: how curated and safe any tourist encounter is; who is presenting the tourist with the experience or information; how the tourist came by the knowledge of the encounter’s existence; how the tourist felt (given their limited or extensive knowledge) about any given encounter; what was presented; and where it was presented. Everything about a tourist encounter determines the staged authenticity and value to both the producers and consumers of that encounter. A staged representation through folkloric dance of an Afro-Brazilian religion is more authentic if it is seen internationally when presented by a dance group from by Brazil. That same performance would

⁴⁹ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett. *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*. 47.
Dean MacCannell. 1999. *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*. 91-107.

have a higher staged authenticity if seen at the headquarters of that dance troupe in the capital city of Salvador in the state of Bahia. No stage representation through dance will have the same staged authenticity as an Afro Brazilian ritual (happening outside of any designated performance spaces) with tourists observing. The staged authenticity of such a tourist encounter would increase if there were fewer tourists involved. Stage authenticity is not only about tourists. It is about the producers as well. For the producers, (or those that are involved with putting on an event), such as an Afro Brazilian religious ritual, the staged authenticity would increase even more if there were no tourists involved at all. In such an example the staged element of stage authenticity would be lessened because those involved would all be at the ritual as full participants, thus with no tourist gaze present. Staged authenticity, as I refer to it in this dissertation, involves encounters of tourism that involve both tourists and producers of performances (sometimes called hosts) within roots tourism.

Staged authenticity in performance, either through consumable tourism encounters of performance such as a folkloric ballet in a traditional theatrical setting, or through more participatory tourism encounters (public or private) such as processions within a public festival, arguably are key to what roots tourists are attempting to connect with. Roots tourists are individuals who seek to access parts of their own identity by traveling transnationally to a geography with which they identify. Staged authenticity cannot be taken or exchanged with your own subjectivity. It is a consumable product within tourism, in that it is a descriptor. It is an aspect that describes the content and character of what tourists may encounter in performance. It is a measure of the perception of that tourist of their own experience. It is a determining factor in how a tourist reflects on their time engaging with the culture and people of particular place.

Roots tourists are generally looking for the highest staged authenticity possible. I would argue roots tourists are interested in reaching the extreme of what staged authenticity can offer,

almost blurring into an area beyond their understanding and perception. For this reason, not everything about the encounter needs to be understood by a roots tourist. In fact, if some parts of the encounter are not interpretable or readily accessible, a roots tourist may deem that encounter to be so high in staged authenticity as to reach beyond what the uninitiated can understand. In such an instance, roots tourists may place a high value on having experienced something so authentic that it was not prepared, or “dumbed down,” for their benefit or comfort.

To say that authenticity is staged is not to say that it is fake. In performance what we see on stage does not have to be actually happening in order to be “real.” An example of this would be in theatre/performance: those seen on stage playing characters are not actually those characters (necessarily).⁵⁰ An audience suspends disbelief in order to go along with the story; they are not being purposefully deceived; they are engaging on the story’s level. Similarly, in tourism, staged authenticity provides the story. Roots tourists that wish to engage with the high level of staged authenticity (almost blurring into the unintelligible by the uninitiated), seek to engage with the story of the people/ place/time that they identify with (from a variation of the heritage/homeland perspective).

Just because a scholarly link and written archival record, or historical/sociological study finds that the art forms and people of Bahia are not as African as the myth of Mama Africa would promote them as, does not mean that roots tourists cannot engage with that story. It also does not mean that the people of Bahia cannot tell their story in that particular way. I am not saying that fictional histories of specific geographies should be fed to tourists simply to make them feel better. No, I am not saying that. What I am acknowledging is that historical and sociological criticism

⁵⁰ “twice behaved behavior” is an allusion to the work of Richard Schechner. Richard Schechner. 1985. *Between Theatre and Anthropology*. 36.

must take into account the lived experiences of local (and visiting) human beings. Part of that lived experience is the fact that not true stories, and sometimes essentialized notions and myths, have very real effects, both positive and negative. In this dissertation, and my knowledge production in general, I choose to focus on the positive and generative (possible) effects without discounting the critical historical contexts that set the scene for my fieldwork.

0.3.10 Black-ness in Brazil & the Afro-Brazilian identity

In Bahia, the scene that is set is Black. This dissertation is about people who describe themselves as “Black” traveling to Bahia to be with and around other Black people. But Black, Black-ness, and Black people, as I am referring to them here, are not the essentialized notions that are part of the myth of Mama Africa. They are not a uniform homogenous group. Black-ness has different meanings, distinct legacies of marginalization, and diverse terms used to reference it, which vary temporally and geographically. This discussion does not even go into colorism, and the many complicated ways that within the Black community (internationally) the shade of a person’s skin (from light brown to deep ebony) affects discrimination, privilege, and interethnic/intra-racial interaction. Black-ness for the purposes of this paragraph (and this dissertation in general), refers to the identity of an individual, group, or art form. Black-ness is a designation; it is a conceptual connection to the continent of Africa, often through essentialized notions (local or global). To be Black in Bahia is different from being Black in the rest of Brazil, which is different from being Black in United States. From the 1930s onward, Brazil promoted the idea of a racial paradise. The state publicly and nationally praised Black-ness, while continuing to marginalize (and be violent against) Black people. In the United States, Black-ness has specific legacies associated with eras such as Jim Crow and social discrimination such as the “one drop

rule” which deem someone to be of African descent if they had even one Black ancestor (within a certain number of generations). In the US, African ancestry has never been nationally lauded. Whereas, in Brazil, because of attempting to promote the nation-state internationally as a racial paradise, African ancestry is considered to be had by all –figuratively and literally. This is not true of course, yet legacies of such ideas illustrate the difference between Black-ness in United States and Black-ness in Brazil. That difference is part of the staged authenticity of tourism encounters in Bahia. Given Bahia’s place, as the colloquially acknowledged center of Black-ness in the Americas, anyone and any art of Bahia has a high level of staged authenticity associated with its connection to Africa. This connection, however, cannot be disassociated from Brazil’s perceived exoticism and notions of African survival, in art and culture.

0.4 WHAT EACH CHAPTER OFFERS

0.4.1 Chapter one: Why Brazil? And other relevant questions

Chapter one addresses questions such as: why Brazil? and, why tourism? This chapter is meant to contextualize and situate the case studies for the two chapters that follow. Brazil presents a unique case in roots tourism because this sort of tourism is usually undertaken by tourists that are returning to their homeland. An example of roots tourism, sometimes called heritage tourism, is Israeli birthright pilgrimage tours, where the nation-state of Israel sponsors the travel of young Jewish people so that they may visit and be welcomed in their homeland. Another example is the tourism industry of Ghana inviting members of the African diaspora to connect once again with their “mother,” Africa. Yet in the Brazilian case, members of the African diaspora do not

necessarily identify with being Brazilian or even Latin American. Roots tourists of the African diaspora travel to Brazil in order to connect with their African roots. Pan-African networking shows itself to be the reason why and the reason for such travel to be undertaken. The unique scenario of attempting to access Africa through Brazil, is complicated by essentialized notions of African-ness and Black-ness that—if not unpacked—mark Bahia, its people, and its culture, as static unchanging examples of pure African identity. The myth of Brazil being a racial democracy—the debunked idea that Brazil is a harmonious mixture of all races—and the myth of Mama Africa—the false assumption that Black people all over the world are one monolithic group with an essentialized notion of Africa inside them—further obscures the utopian possibilities that performance can afford for roots tourists and their Brazilian hosts. Brazil is not a racial democracy, it is a nation rife with economic inequality often based on race, and a geography where violence against those who are marked Black by their bodies is rampant. The same could be said of the United States, though, so what makes the Brazilian case different? In Brazil, people of African heritage and their art forms are integral to the public and communal understandings of national identity. So, while African-ness is a celebrated part of Afro-Brazilian-ness, and Afro-Brazilian-ness is a unique identifier that is promoted throughout the world as distinctly Brazilian, the Afro-descendant people these identities are based on continued to be marginalized, and at times victimized by state-sanctioned violence. This is what separates Brazil from other nations in the hemisphere, and what draws the African diaspora roots tourists to seek out Bahia in particular. Bahia is at the contested epicenter of Afro-Brazilian-ness and its cultural forms, including the martial-dance *capoeira*, the social dance *samba*, and the Afro-Brazilian religion *Candomblé*. Chapter one also includes a review of related literature in the areas of Africa-descendant

performance of Brazil, folklorization of intangible heritage, alternative exploitative forms of tourism, tourism's emancipatory possibilities, networks and Pan-Africanisms.

0.4.2 Chapter two – case study: Essence of a Goddess/Girls for a Change

The Girls for Change “Essence of a Goddess” trip took place over ten days in the latter part of June of 2016. Girls for Change is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering growth in young women of African American descent. Girls for a Change is a national organization, and although young women of all ethnicities are allowed and encouraged to be a part of the organization, the mission statement is purposefully dedicated to young Black women of adolescent years and younger. Girls For a Change was drawn to create a trip for their constituents that specifically took young women to Bahia, Brazil. Why is that? I argue that it is because this trip constituted an example of African American roots tourism. Yet, often roots tourism in Brazil is written about in terms of older African Americans seeking leisure travel, usually those that are well educated and have disposable income to be able to afford travel. This case study complicates that narrative by the African American visitors being young women and their chaperones from Girls for a Change.

The constellation of Black tourism sites that I have mentioned earlier has not been described from a performance standpoint. It is precisely in that performance standpoint that the emancipatory possible can be found. I seek to point out: what the frame is in the performance scenario. To get to this analysis, first, I will describe the event using critical auto ethnography of performance. Second, I will take the auto ethnography to find the six aspects of Taylor's performance scenario. Third, I will contextualize the scenario by establishing the descriptive elements of that scenario alongside the historical narratives and dominant narratives of present-

day understandings that surround the events (that constitute the tourism encounter). Finally, my analysis will focus on how the frame can be shifted slightly to promote emancipatory possible as one of many potential outcomes.

During the Girls for a Change trip, I was traveling as an embedded participant. I was accompanying a group of roots tourists on their journey to and from Bahia, Brazil. It is important to note as I describe my experiences that the Other needs to be pointed out so as to be in line with the ethical goals of performative writing of performance ethnography. In this case, the Others are both the roots tourists and the hosts (producers) of the tourism encounters we were invited to engage in as a group. We travelled to Salvador and Cachoeira in Bahia over the ten-day period. The group stayed in a small hotel near one of the lighthouses of Salvador's tourism districts. Each day we visited a different part of the city by van. These included historic neighborhoods (such as Pelourinho—the historic city center), Afro-focused service organizations (dedicated to cultural and education work), a workshop day, a day trip to Cachoeira, the festival of *São João* (St. John), visiting a religious *terreiro*, and free time.

This Girls for a Change trip is essential as my site of analysis because of how it opens up the space to talk about the constellation of Black tourism sites that are both within yet also distinctly apart from the non-Afro-centric tourism industry in Bahia. Within this site of analysis, I have chosen the focus of this case study to be the workshop day. During the workshop day, a conference room was rented out and we received four one-hour experiences: a history lecture by a local academic and activist, a music *samba* lesson, a *capoeira* lesson, and a dancing *samba* lesson. All sessions had translators from Portuguese to English (some formal, some informal). The organizers for this day in particular were: Girls for a Change organization, the travel agent, the

tour guide, and the chosen instructors of the workshops. All of whom collaborated to make the workshop day successful and beneficial for all involved as a part of the established trip schedule.

By focusing my analysis on one specific day and a tourism event that has four distinct workshops, I hope to use the lens of performance to point out moments where the lines blurred between participants and spectators. Additionally, by deploying scenario as my method of analysis, I am building on Diana Taylor's ideas that both archive and repertoire work in concert to transmit social knowledge. She advocates that the use of scenario places spectators within its frame, "implicating us in its ethics and politics." Using scenario, I want to establish the current frame (#3 in the list coming up) and contextualize that frame with all of the other aspects of scenario: 1) physical location, 2) embodiment of social actors, 3) the frame, 4) how it is passed on, 5) situating ourselves, and 6) past situations conjured up. This is what is referred to as "historicizing" in Diana Taylor's work. For Taylor, conceptualizing the frame (#3) of contemporary performance in conjunction with the other aspects of scenario, particularly past situations (#6), connects current debates to past ones. In Taylor's work, this historicizing —connection from present to past— always seems to reiterate one specific sixteenth century occurrence: Conquest. My own work does not yield such results, nor am I invested in finding the one original source of present day debates surrounding contemporary performances. Instead, my focus is to find possible connections the frame could be conjuring up. These may be from the distant past or recent past, and there may also be more than one. Here Taylor and I differ in specific tactic and purpose, but not in overarching goal: scenario is a process by which non-written performance phenomena and lived experience can constitute and transmit social knowledge. Furthermore, in doing so, scenarios always conjure up past situations and analyzing (historicizing) the frame (within the scenario) in relation to the other aspects that surround it can force us to consider ethical questions.

I consider this process crucial to viewing the tourism encounter as performance in order to find the emancipatory possible. The current frame is what is presently possible while my ideas about the emancipatory possible are an expansion towards higher potential for social justice infused tourism. This version of tourism would consciously expand possibility toward emancipatory goals; these utopian and emancipatory goals stand in contrast to current narrations of how staged authenticity only serves to participate in global inequities and is not real. All the while I hope to highlight what happened (from my point of view), while forefronting the Other and my own positionality as a determining factor in my lived experiences during the trip. Keeping the Other(s) in mind is to always keep them in the story (the Other's voice, history, yearnings), while acknowledging that any knowledge concerning these things comes to the reader of this dissertation through me as the researcher (and not directly from the source).

0.4.3 Chapter three – case study: *Festa & Irmandade da Boa Morte*

Chapter two establishes the constellation of Black tourism sites in Bahia. The first case study was focused on a day of private workshops situated as part of a 10-day series of experiences. In contrast, chapter three looks at one specific event that is a multi-day experience, widely open to the public. Additionally, the tourism encounter is of a much higher profile within the constellation of Afro-centric tourism experiences. Chapter three also seeks to use the lens of performance to analyze the event, but this time I am writing from the point of view of an independent researcher at a public festival as opposed to an embedded member of an established travel group.

Using critical auto ethnography of performance, I detail my experiences as spectator and participant during the *Festa de Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death) in Cachoeira, Bahia. The event is special because at the center of the festival is a group of older Black women that are all over

forty-five years of age. These mature Afro-Brazilian women are members of a Catholic lay organization called *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). These women are said to be direct descendants (if not by blood then by legacy) of the first enslaved Africans of Brazil that were emancipated. The women are descended from women that bought their own freedom and that of their family members through hard work and sacrifice. Some scholarly work has already been written about the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). Most of it is focused on religious synchronicity, adaptation, survival, and resistance. Many writers also focus on the history of *Candomblé* in Bahia in relation to the Catholic rites associated with the *Festa de Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death). I am not concerned with those things. This study respectfully looks at the rituals and rites as a part of a performance that involves the entire town along with the tourists that go specifically to experience this renowned festivity.

The *Festa de Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death). takes place between 13 and 17 of August. Each day has a special meaning in the rituals of the Catholic lay sisterhood *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). The first night is to mourn and celebrate the lives of women that have come before as sisters of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte*. The second is to commemorate the death of Our Lady of the Good Death, Mary, the mother of Christ. The third day is a celebration of the ascension of Mary to heaven. Here she transforms from Our Lady of Good Death to Our Lady of Glory. The following days are commemorated with feasts and public music and dancing. During the festival days, Catholic masses, processions through the streets of Cachoeira, communal feasts, and group dancing in public squares are aspects of the event that I wish to consider from a performance standpoint.

In studying the performance aspects of *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), my ethnography analytical work in this chapter is informed by the work of Barnaby King, Dwight

Conquergood, Clifford Geertz, Paul Gilroy and Soyini Madison. I will call upon a combination of those influences and my critical auto ethnography of performance toward the goal of finding the emancipatory possible. This event is important to the constellation of Black tourism in Bahia because of the lauded nature of this particular annual festival. It allows me to point out how the associated staged authenticity works in this scenario. Also, I will highlight how religious and non-religious aspects co-exist for all involved in the event. I investigate as what a more performance-centered approach might reveal as opposed to the dominant narratives that currently surround the event –the idea that the event is a seemingly authentic example of African cultural survival that promotes essentializing of Black people in Brazil. I am also invested in complicating how narratives of global inequity in tourism are written about, given that the central figures of the festival are all Black women of advanced years.

0.4.4 Chapter four: Emancipatory possible & Digital Storytelling

The emancipatory possible does not require digital media because it is based on live performance engagement by producers (hosts) and spectators-participants (guests) of tourism encounters. Still, while not integral, media can be used to amplify the effect of the emancipatory possible by extending the reach and experience of a tourism encounter (before, during, after). In this chapter, I explore how the framing (before, during, and after) aspect of the emancipatory possible could be translated to digital media, mostly through websites, documentation, and personal narrative participatory heritage. Digital storytelling will also be discussed as part of digital ethnographic practices. I argue that digital media represents a way to augment the effect that the emancipatory possible has on those that choose to engage deeply with a porous performance event. Using the two case studies as archive, I will use what has been written about

digital ethnography, participatory heritage and digital storytelling to project possible ways that media could be deployed toward social justice goals to counteract global inequity.

0.5 CLOSING COMMENTS OF THIS INTRODUCTION

My hopes for this dissertation are to invite further inquiry into the performance aspects of tourism in Brazil, as well as the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean. There are lesser-known performance forms in Brazil aside from *capoeira*, *samba* and Carnival. For example, within *capoeira* training regiments there is a parallel style of stick fighting called *maculele*. It is also a martial-dance form but differs in that it includes weapons and has aspects of indigenous identity ascribed to it. In other Latin American countries, for example Colombia, there exists large-scale equestrian ballets that are performed on a field the size of a football pitch. These and other sites of analysis form part a tourism ecosystem of performance, that can tell us much about identity construction and maintenance regionally and hemispherically. Since I argue that tourism is a space where social justice initiatives could have great impact, even if they are within smaller foci of reform, more tourism (including roots tourism) encounters need to be examined. I hope this dissertation invites others to join me in exploring these questions and topics.

1.0 **CAPÍTULO UM (CHAPTER ONE)**

1.1 **BRAZIL: WHERE DO WE START?**

Brazil presents an interesting case in the study of roots tourism. Roots tourism refers to individuals and groups returning to an acknowledged or accepted ancestral homeland. The impulse to connect rootedness to people and land has been written about by anthropologist Lisa Malkki. She points out that,

The metaphorical concept of having roots involves intimate linkages between people and place—linkages that are increasingly recognized in anthropology... There has emerged a new awareness of the global social fact that, now more than perhaps ever before, people are chronically mobile and routinely displaced, and invent homes and homelands in the absence of territorial, national bases—not in situ, but through memories of, and claims on, places that they can or will no longer corporeally inhabit.⁵¹

Roots tourism is a return to those places, “that they [displaced people] can or will no longer corporeally inhabit.” Although Malkki is writing primarily about refugee displacement and the scholarship dedicated to it, the concept of inventing “homes and homeland in the absence of territorial, national bases,” is one that resonates beyond the refugee experience to include migrants of all sorts, no matter when their ancestral migration may have taken place. An example of roots tourism is birthright pilgrimage tours by college-age Jewish students as part of a state-sponsored opportunity to develop an attachment to Israel, their “homeland.”⁵² Another example would be the

⁵¹ Malkki, Liisa. 1992. *National geographic: The rooting of peoples and the territorialization of national identity among scholars and refugees*. Cultural Anthropology 7 (1): 24-44.

⁵² Kelner, Shaul. 2010. *Tours that bind: Diaspora, pilgrimage, and israeli birthright tourism*. 1st ed. New York: New York University Press. 5.

travel by heritage tourists that “return” to the Scottish Highlands to connect with their “roots.”⁵³ Similarly, the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Ghanaian castles, such as Cape Coast and Elmina, have become part of the heritage tourism of that country which focuses Ghana’s culture and history. Social Anthropologist Katharina Schramm imparts that, “particular attention is paid [by the country’s tourism industry] to people from the African diaspora, who are invited to ‘come home’ to Ghana to re-establish their linkages with ‘Mother Africa’.”⁵⁴

In the Brazilian case, members of the African diaspora, also called “Afro-descendant” people (or “Black people” or “Black folks” depending on the context) from all over the world travel to Brazil to connect with their Afro-descendant identity.⁵⁵ Roots tourism allows for Afro-descendant people to travel to a destination other than their current location in order to “go back” (as in “return”) and get something they perceive to have been left behind during their recent or not-so-recent ancestral migration away from the African continent. Travel agencies such as YourWorld Consultant group offer that “African Heritage tours to Brazil...provide groups, families and individuals with first rate educational, ethnic, cultural, professional, religious and business travel packages.”⁵⁶ Brazilian social scientist Patricia de Santana Pinho elucidates that,

African-American roots tourism can be situated in the long history of the search for Africa by Afro-descendants in the New World that includes such important events as Marcus Garvey’s ‘back to Africa’ movement and the PanAfrican congresses that acknowledged the commonality between Africans and the world’s dispersed blacks. African-American roots tourism to Africa began, however, only in the early 1970s. The 1976 publication of Alex Haley’s best-seller *Roots* inspired African-American scholarship, culture, and politics in a period marked by a growing awareness by diasporic blacks of the need to *recover-or*, according to Stuart Hall, *produce*-both their links with Africa and their own Africanness.⁵⁷

⁵³ Coleman, Simon, John Eade, and European Association of Social Anthropologists. 2004. *Reframing pilgrimage: Cultures in motion*. New York/London;; Routledge. 22.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

⁵⁵ de Santana Pinho, Patricia. "African-American roots tourism in Brazil." *Latin American Perspectives* 35, no. 3 (2008): 70-86.

⁵⁶ <http://www.yourworldgroup.com/home.html>

⁵⁷ de Santana Pinho. 2008. "African-American roots tourism in Brazil." 72

Pinho is pointing out that not only is roots tourism for US-African-Americans and other non-US-Afro-diasporic people a relatively recent phenomenon starting in 1970s, but that the “links with Africa and their own Africanness” is “produce[d]” rather than “recovere[d].” She writes more about this in her book *Mama Africa* where she builds on the work of Stuart Hall to argue that the West has frozen the idea of Africa in a kind of timeless zone that is always primitive and unchanging. Members of the African diaspora to look for, but never find or recover it, according to Pinho and Hall. Therefore, Africa as a place belongs to an imagined history, geography and community.⁵⁸ The “search for Africa” leads many Afro-descendant people to make a kind of pilgrimage to the African continent. Kim Warren and Elizabeth MacGonagle shed light on this in *African Hosts & their Guests*, by writing that, “American travel agencies, churches, and community groups have encouraged Blacks in the diaspora to travel to West Africa not simply as a vacation destination but specifically as an ancestral homeland where US-African-Americans can make pilgrimages to fill in gaps of their identities and family histories.”⁵⁹ But what happens when Afro-descendant people “search for Africa” by traveling to a destination outside of the African continent? In the Brazilian case, Afro-descendant tourists who travel to Brazil are not always Brazilian by ancestry. This is an anomaly in the context of roots tourism where usually tourists return to the place they perceive to be “home.”

In this example, members of the African diaspora seem to be connected to other Afro-descendant people around the world by what scholar of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures Ananya

⁵⁸ de Santana Pinho. 2010. *Mama africa: Reinventing blackness in bahia*. Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press. 32.

⁵⁹ Warren, Kim and Elizabeth MacGonagle 2012. “ ‘How much for Kunta Kinte?!’ Sites of Memory & diasporan encounters in West Africa.” *African hosts & their guests: Cultural dynamics of tourism*. Woodbridge: Rochester, NY. 75-76.

Kabir terms to be a trans(post)colonial connectivity.⁶⁰ Trans(post)colonial is her term that helps highlight engagements by people of African descent in collaborations (physical and ideological) across (post)imperial frontiers with political goals that move from fear to possibility.⁶¹ Although Kabir's trans(post)colonial connections are based in rhythm cultures (music and social dance), I see the possibility to use this term for the connections between Afro-descendant people in tourism as well due to the possibility of interaction between individuals from Lusophone, Anglophone, Francophone, and Hispanophone linguistic zones across Africa, Europe and the Americas. The Afro-descendancy of African US-American tourists and their Afro-Brazilian "hosts" binds them together with other Black people from other geographies that are (post)imperial or former colonies of European empires. This does not negate scholarship that argues that a post-colonial time cannot and has not ever existed (due to the modernity/coloniality understanding of the colonial matrix of power).⁶² Trans(post)colonial is simply a different way of identifying and naming the connection amongst Afro-descent people and their cultural creations (music, dance, tourism, etc.), similar to prior intellectual movements that, "acknowledged the commonality between Africans and the world's dispersed Blacks."⁶³ The difference for Brazil is also that the roots tourism that takes place there is a survival story of celebratory hope, rather than some continental African roots tourism

⁶⁰ Kabir, Ananya Jahanara. "Plantation, Archive, Stage: Trans (post) colonial Intimations in Katherine Dunham's L'Ag'ya and Little Black Sambo." *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2, no. 02 (2015): 213-231.

Kabir, Ananya Jahanara. "Oceans, cities, islands: sites and routes of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures." *Atlantic Studies* 11, no. 1 (2014): 106-124.

⁶¹ Kabir (2014), 115-117.

⁶² The colonial matrix of power referenced here is the one explained in Walter D. Mignolo's *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*. It is also discussed in the work of Lisa Jackson-Schebetta [through/with Anibal Quijano, Walter D. Mignolo, and José Rabasa]: "That is, modernity cannot be thought, written, or lived on its own but is always already modernity/coloniality. Coloniality, in turn, is neither colonial nor postcolonial. It persists past the postcolonial precisely because modernity depends on it."

Lisa Jackson-Schebetta. 2017. *Traveler There is No road: Theatre, the Spanish Civil War, and the Decolonial Imagination in the Americas*. 8.

⁶³ de Santana Pinho. 2008. "African-American roots tourism in Brazil." 72

sites that are more about lament and acknowledgement of pain related to the trans-Atlantic slave trade.⁶⁴ Historian Anadelia Romo calls this celebratory location of Black-ness: “Brazil’s Living Museum,” where the state of Bahia’s majority Black population changed from being a source of embarrassment to being central to Bahian identity.⁶⁵ Because of this constructed Bahian-ness that is integrally Black and at times presented as being fixed in the past, (i.e., a museum you can visit with live people), Black people from around the world are compelled to visit Bahia, Brazil as a kind of “Black Mecca” within the Brazilian nation-state.

In the American hemisphere, Brazil is the nation-state with a history of having imported the most human beings from Africa as chattel enslaved labor during the era of the transatlantic slave trade of the 17th through 19th centuries.⁶⁶ After the eras of slavery, as early as the mid-1800s through the mid-1900s, there existed images of Brazil’s peaceful and idealistic race relations — what is now known to be the constructed myth of “racial democracy.” Racial democracy promoted the lie that all races were completely equal because the Brazilian people were an amalgamation of and descendants of White European (Portuguese), Indigenous, and African (enslaved labor) through continued generational miscegenation. Furthermore, Brazilian scholars of the early and mid-twentieth century argued in such works as *Casa-Grande e Senzala* by Gilberto Freyre that Brazil was a stronger nation because of the miscegenation that took place.⁶⁷ Although Freyre did not use the term specifically in his most well-known work, the idea of harmonious racial relations was a major part of his thesis. Pervasive and powerful, the myth of racial democracy could only

⁶⁴ de Santana Pinho. 2008. “Brazil in the Map of Africanness: Examining Roots Tourism and International Black Relations.” *Brazil and the Americas: Convergences and perspectives*. 145-146.

⁶⁵ Romo, Anadelia A. *Brazil's living museum: race, reform, and tradition in Bahia*. Univ of North Carolina Press, 2010.

⁶⁶ Slavevoyages.org

⁶⁷ Freyre, Gilberto. *Casa-grande & senzala: formação da família brasileira sob o regime da economica patriarcal*. Vol. 1. J. Olympio, 1933.

be, “transformed into collective political commitment in the 1940s and 1950s because it gained the endorsement of subordinate sectors of society, including Black activists and organizations.”⁶⁸

It was not the miscegenation per-se, but the myth of Brazil being a “racial democracy” that has been debunked and shown to be a non-truth perpetuated by those in power and accepted by those in less powerful segments of society. Pinho explains that,

Although the myth of racial democracy does not accurately reflect Brazilian society, it does harbor the desire of how the reality of the nation’s class and racial relations could be constituted. If dark skinned, impoverished Brazilians embrace the myth, it is not because they are gullible or easily fooled. As agents, they chose to take on the myth of racial democracy not because they believe there is no racism in Brazil but because of the elements of hope and liberation the myth conveys.⁶⁹

The fact remains that Afro-descendant people in Brazil continue to be marginalized. In this, they are not dissimilar to all darker-skinned Black people living as diasporic subjects within industrialized or industrializing nations. They are considered to be the descendants of the enslaved Africans that were kidnapped, transported and exploited for labor during the era of the Atlantic slave trade (i.e., golden triangle, triangle trade, human chattel slavery in the Americas).

Yet, here again the Brazilian case presents a difference. Other nation-states, such as the United States, did not promote racial democracy in the twentieth century. What the constructed myth of racial democracy allowed for was the “survival” of outwardly and overtly African ways of being to become part of the geography, art, culture, and people of specific Brazilian geographies. So while racial democracy is a debunked myth, its effects of having Afro-descendant people and culture present, highlighted, and perhaps even “preserved” (albeit in a constructed manner) in Bahia is well documented.⁷⁰ No other state/region within Brazil is considered as Black or

⁶⁸ *Mama Africa*, 18.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 19-20.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

“African” as Bahia. Bahia has the largest Afro-descendant population within Brazil and its vibrant Black culture is a foundational part of its public image domestically and abroad.⁷¹

This constructed and promoted preservation is what makes Bahia so inviting to the Afro-descendant person that lives in an industrialized nation and seeks out roots tourism experiences in the Bahian and Brazilian contexts. Patricia Pinho in *Brazil and the Americas*, explains, “due to their search for cultural roots or preserved African culture, roots tourists elect the Brazilian state of Bahia, especially its cities of Salvador and Cachoeira, as the main historical place where they believe African traditions have been more carefully maintained.”⁷² In Bahia, Black people (from outside of Bahia) find a place where the majority of residents are of a brown-hued skin color.⁷³ Many Bahians are Afro-Brazilians and celebrate their Afro-descendancy as part of their regional identity. This regional identity is commodified within the tourism industry of Brazil. Brazil is a multimillion-dollar tourist-state. Brazilian tourism takes a marginalized population and uses their iconography, symbols, and people to differentiate (establish a niche) from other travel destinations in a competition for transnational tourist dollars. This is precisely because Brazil as a whole is so popular a tourist destination, and Bahia is so marked as a distinctly Afro-Brazilian geography (in what has been called the “Living Museum”).

This is also why it can be such fertile ground for emancipatory practices. The Afro-descendant people there already know they are being exploited for their constructed identity. An example of this would be the *blocos afro* – Black cultural producers such as Olodum, Ilê Aiyê, and others—who combat racial inequality by developing social service projects, yet also allow their

⁷¹ Ibid., 3-4.

⁷² de Santana Pinho “Brazil in the Map of Africanness...” 137.

⁷³ Ibid., 145-146. This is true of the roots tourism to African nations as well; the difference is the Brazilian context. There are no monuments to the pain of slavery, but instead the Brazilian context is associated with pleasure/joy.

image (and their cultural products) to be used for the constructed notion of regional Bahian identity.⁷⁴ They use this “authenticity” which is staged within the context of tourism to knowingly make a living from the tourism industry.⁷⁵ As they do so, they welcome people from all over the world, some of whom are Black (Afro-descendant trans(post)colonial subjects). The Bahians offer what these tourists came to find: Black-ness in Brazil, a Black-ness that is perceived to survive to this day and seemingly flourishes in the people and customs of Bahia. This Black-ness is a constructed Africanness within a Brazilian context. It promotes the myth of “Mama Africa” as the mother of all Bahians, especially the Afro-descendant ones, and points to the perceived African contribution to Bahian culture as the source of Bahian uniqueness.⁷⁶

I argue that the existence of a constellation of Black tourism sites within the tourism industry of Bahia (and in the greater context of Brazil’s larger tourism industry) focused on socially conscious *blocos Afro* and highlighting Afro-Brazilian art forms that are contextualized within Bahia’s Black population’s struggles, potentially undoes or complicates the effects of the myth of Mama Africa on those that live and visit the Living Museum. These constellation sites of Black tourism sites are all known places, they are not secret in any way, yet they are simply less promoted than other tourism offerings. But for the Black individual coming from abroad to experience Black-ness in Brazil, they offer a level of authenticity beyond what can be found in the folkloric ballets and shops of Bahia’s capital.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 205-206. “While there is a great deal of manipulation on the part of profit-driven tourism agents and self-serving politicians, black cultural producers also objectify and manipulate black cultural expressions, albeit for different purposes.”

⁷⁵ Ibid., 206. “Social scientists must recognize that oppressed minorities themselves produce identities as objects that often assume the functions of a commodity.”

⁷⁶ Ibid., 213-2014.

I propose that the existence of such a constellation is not only worthy of detailed study but that it may provide ways to re-interpret tourism encounters as participating in and productive of what I am calling the “emancipatory possible.” This dissertation pushes past the privilege evident in tourism’s consumers and the suffering and/or subjugation of tourism’s producers (as a result of this unequal privilege) to reveal the participation of local people and the emancipatory possible of all involved in the tourism encounter. Yes, there is privilege and a hegemonic relationship, but there can also be emancipatory practices in place that create something *else*, that promotes utopian possibility.

I propose that the constellation of Black tourist sites draws many, but specifically Black trans(post)colonial subjects, to come and experience Black-ness, Brazil, and themselves in encounters of performance that serve to create spaces of utopian world-making, which I discuss in further detail below. Utopian world making can, I argue, consists of: 1) framing of the encounters, 2) embodied simulation, 3) an extension of the framing and embodiment using digital media. The utopian world making I am advocating is only possible because I am examining these encounters of tourism through the lens of performance. I argue that performance, with its slipperiness, provides enough wiggle room and cultural agency to *possibly* provide *emancipatory* experiences for some or all of the participants within the scenario of a tourism encounter. This is why I am calling the utopian world making I am pointing out herein: “emancipatory possible.”

1.2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1.2.1 Afro-descendant Performance

Scholarship related to afro-descendant performance in Brazil is often focused on the movements and rhythms of *samba*; the martial-dance of *capoeira*; the festival aspects of carnaval(s), and the ritual(s) within Afro-Brazilian religious practices (most often *Candomblé*).

J. Lowell Lewis' *Ring of Liberation* examines capoeira, described as, "a complex Afro-Brazilian martial art that combines feats of great strength and athleticism with music and poetry."⁷⁷ According to *Ring of Liberation*, the origin of *Capoeira* is said to be "early slave culture." Urban Brazilians and others now study the art form around the world. *Capoeira* is, "at once game, sport, mock combat, and ritualized performance, it involves two players who dance and 'battle' within a ring of musicians and singers." This "ring" is called the *roda*. J. Lowell Lewis explores the many components and characteristics of this art form deemed to be particularly "Black" in both inception and practice. Lewis maps the connections between physical, musical, and linguistic play in *capoeira* and highlights the relationships between the creation and recording of cultural meaning in Brazil related to this art form.

Matthias Assunção's *Capoeira: The History of an Afro-Brazilian Martial Art* examines *capoeira* as a contested art form where the divides within Brazilian society are made visible and played out. Assunção's work is considered to be, "the first comprehensive English language review of archive and contemporary literature relating to *Capoeira*, as well as the first scholarly account

⁷⁷ Lewis, J. Lowell. *Ring of liberation: Deceptive discourse in Brazilian capoeira*. University of Chicago Press, 1992.

of *Capoeira*'s history and development.”⁷⁸ Assunção asserts that the marginalized and the underclasses in Brazilian society, Black enslaved people and their descendants, originated *Capoeira*. Now it is a mainstream sport that is taught in Brazilian schools and practiced by a range of people around the world. Advocates seek Olympic recognition for the sport while others see this move as an affront to their Afro-Brazilian heritage. Assunção writes that, “this apparent change in the meaning and purpose of *Capoeira* has led to conflicts between traditionalists, who view *capoeira* as their heritage descended from the maroons, a weapon to be used against the injustice and repression; and reformers, who wish to see *Capoeira* develop as an international sport.”

Bira Almeida’s *Capoeira, a Brazilian art form* is part memoir and part history. Also known as *Mestre Accordion*, Almeida writes an account of how *capoeira* was disseminated around the world by ambassadors of the art form in martial arts masters that emigrated from Brazil.⁷⁹ His own story is of a journey to the United States and how he and others started the first schools of *capoeira* in that country. He writes that, “capoeira weaves fighting, music, dance, prayer, and ritual into an urgent strategy by which people live, struggle, celebrate, and survive together.” Almeida views *capoeira* and its practice as an urgent and necessary tool in the preservation of Afro-Brazilian legacy.

Maya Talmon-Chvaicer’s *The hidden history of capoeira* studies the development and meaning of *capoeira*. She starts with African cultures (from which *capoeira* originated) up to the present. The Brazilian battle dance of *capoeira* is also a national sport and has become popular all over the world. *Capoeira* has undergone many transformations since being brought to the

⁷⁸ Assunção, Matthias Röhrig. *Capoeira: The history of an Afro-Brazilian martial art*. Routledge, 2004.

⁷⁹ Almeida, Bira. *Capoeira, a Brazilian art form: History, philosophy, and practice*. North Atlantic Books, 1986.

Americas by enslaved Africans. Maya Talmon-Chvaicer writes that, “it has diffused throughout Brazilian society and beyond, taking on a multiplicity of meanings for those who participate in it and for the societies in which it is practiced.”⁸⁰ *The hidden history of capoeira* forefronts African origins and meanings of *capoeira*, while also acknowledging how Catholic and Christian culture has contributed to its development. Talmon-Chvaicer details how *capoeira* was experienced and understood by both Africans and Europeans, and by their descendants. She argues that many obscured aspects of *capoeira* have been repressed by the dominant Euro-Brazilian culture. Talmon-Chvaicer’s *The hidden history of capoeira*, “analyzes the outlooks on life, symbols, and rituals of the three major cultures that inspired *capoeira*—the Congolese (the historic area known today as Congo-Angola), the Yoruban, and the Catholic Portuguese cultures.”

Floyd Merrell’s *Capoeira and Candomblé* explores his experience with and reflections on *Capoeira* and *Candomblé*. For Merrell, “Capoeira is a unique music-dance-sport-play activity created by African slaves; Candomble is a hybrid religion combining Catholic and African beliefs and practices.”⁸¹

J. Lorand Matory’s *Black Atlantic Religion* engages the Afro-Brazilian *Candomblé* religion and its connections to and influences on other parts of the Afro-descendant world. *Candomblé* is a religion of spirit possession (embodied trance), dance, healing, and blood sacrifice with counterparts in Nigeria, the Benin Republic, Haiti, Cuba, Trinidad, and the United States.⁸² Matory argues that African culture in the Americas has flourished greatly among the urban and wealthy that are exposed to other cultures. Their embrace of African religion is therefore not a survival (or

⁸⁰ Talmon-Chvaicer, Maya. *The hidden history of capoeira: a collision of cultures in the Brazilian battle dance*. University of Texas Press, 2008.

⁸¹ Merrell, Floyd. *Capoeira and Candomblé: conformity and resistance in Brazil*. Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005.

⁸² Matory, J. Lorand. *Black Atlantic religion: Tradition, transnationalism, and matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé*. Princeton University Press, 2005.

part of their African past), then it is a strategic choice in their multicultural world as part of a circum-Atlantic circuit. Matory contends that, “*Candomblé* religion's leaders have been well-traveled writers and/or merchants, whose stake in African-inspired religion was as much commercial as spiritual.” Because of this, they influenced Africa as much as Brazil, placing *Candomblé* (and its counterparts) at the center of transnational forces. For Matory, *Candomblé* is defined by the diversity of its oft far-away connections (to people of differing geography and social class).

Stefania Capone’s *Searching for Africa in Brazil* argues that twentieth-century research and writing contributed to the construction of an idealized “Afro-Brazilian religious orthodoxy” that is imbued with Yoruban traditions, especially in the state of Bahia.⁸³ She demonstrates that *Candomblé* leaders imposed their vision of *Candomblé* on anthropologists and other researchers in order to reshape narratives about Afro-Brazilian religious practice in their own interest. Capone’s fieldwork in Salvador da Bahia and Rio de Janeiro demonstrates that there is no pure or orthodox Afro-Brazilian religion. Capone’s work reveals these practices to be part of a “unique religious continuum.” She reveals how religious identity is constantly being negotiated.

Chris MacGowan and Ricardo Pessanha’s *The Brazilian Sound*, is work that surveys Brazilian popular music. Its content ranges from *samba*, bossa nova, and music of the Northeast (Bahia), amongst other genres.⁸⁴ Similarly, Larry Crook’s *Brazilian music* explores the music from Brazil's Northeast. It is a work written to engage the non-specialist (in music) that also connects cultural and historical importance to the music from this region within the larger Brazilian

⁸³ Capone, Stefania. *Searching for Africa in Brazil: Power and tradition in candomblé*. Duke University Press, 2010.

⁸⁴ McGowan, Chris, and Ricardo Pessanha. *The Brazilian sound: samba, bossa nova, and the popular music of Brazil*. Temple University Press, 1998.

context.⁸⁵ Along the same lines, Barbara Browning studies Brazilian dance cultures by combining historical research with personal accounts in *Samba*. Browning also includes Brazilian ex-pat communities in the United States as part of her field research. Using ethnography and musicology, Browning is able to write about Brazilian dance (specifically in Bahia) from a dancer's point of view.⁸⁶

Peter Fryer's *Rhythms of resistance* looks at how the rhythms of Africa and European popular music were combined to create the musical and dancing traditions of contemporary Brazil. Fryer explains that African rhythms are at the heart of contemporary Black Brazilian music. *Rhythms of resistance* traces that journey and, "describes how slaves, mariners, and merchants brought African music from Angola and the ports of east Africa to Latin America. In particular, they brought it to Brazil —today the country with the largest Black population of any outside Africa."⁸⁷ Fryer looks at this "musical crossover" from a political perspective, which includes the African heritage in the cultural identity of Black Brazilians today.

Clarence Bernard Henry's *Let's Make Some Noise* focuses on the concepts of Axé and *Candomblé*. Henry argues that both Axé and *Candomblé* have been appropriated (and reinvented) in Brazilian popular culture. The book details how many Brazilian popular music styles such as *samba* have elements that stem from the Afro-Brazilian religion. *Let's Make Some Noise* argues that Axé is a unifying force that connects secular and religious Afro-Brazilian music. Henry explains, "In Brazil, the West African Yoruba concept of àsé is known as Axé and has been

⁸⁵ Crook, Larry. 2005. *Brazilian music: Northeastern traditions and the heartbeat of a modern nation*. Santa Barbara, Calif: ABC-CLIO.

⁸⁶ Browning, Barbara. 1995. *Samba: Resistance in motion*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

⁸⁷ Fryer, Peter, 2000. *Rhythms of resistance: African musical heritage in brazil*. London: Pluto.

reinvented, transmitted, and nurtured in *Candomblé*, an Afro-Brazilian religion that is practiced in Salvador, Bahia.”⁸⁸

Severino João Medeiros Albuquerque and Kathryn Bishop-Sanchez’s *Performing Brazil* is an anthology that argues that diverse forms of performance are best understood when presented in tandem, it offers new takes on better-known forms, such as carnival and *capoeira*, as well as those studied less often, including gender acts, curatorial practice, political protest, and the performance of Brazil in the United States.⁸⁹ Albuquerque and Bishop-Sanchez put together a series of essays that draws upon Brazilian and performance studies in order to examine sites of analysis that include the staging of *capoeira* and *samba*, body language, sex symbols, cannibalism, among others. One of the contributors, Christina F. Rosa, examines the performances of the Brazilian dance company Grupo Corpo. This performing arts company has “performed Brazil” through dance expression over four decades of touring within Brazil and internationally. Rose argues that while Grupo Corpo’s efforts have a lead to new interpretations of Black-ness onstage within Brazil, outside of Brazil, these nuances are not able to be interpreted by international audiences.⁹⁰ Another notable chapter is written by Ana Paula Höfling. Höfling focuses on performances of *capoeira* and the development of those performances over time. She contrasts the moments in Brazil’s past when *capoeira* begins to gain political legitimacy and becomes socially acceptable (as dance folklore and heritage performance), with moments and examples of *capoeira* becoming “whitened” as part of its transformation into a national symbol.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Henry, Clarence Bernard. 2008. *Let's make some noise: Axé and the African roots of Brazilian popular music*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

⁸⁹ Albuquerque, Severino João Medeiros, Kathryn Bishop-Sanchez. 2015. *Performing brazil: Essays on culture, identity, and the performing arts*. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.

⁹⁰ Ibid. 10. 67-97.

⁹¹ Ibid. 10-11. 98-125.

Intersections exist between Afro-descendant performance in Bahia and popular theatre in Latin America. Judith A. Weiss with Leslie Damasceno report that,

Moreover, numerous religious dramas originating in the missionary theatre or non-European drama and ritual survive to this day, some transmuted by the superimposition of the hegemonic culture, other relatively intact. They are staged in public spaces, often closely connected to a shrine or other religious places, and are usually grass roots participatory undertakings directed by religious authorities or led by civic leaders and conforming to prescribed patterns of ritual.⁹²

Here Weiss with Damasceno are contextualizing the role of hemispherically-African-American dramatic forms within their historical research in *Latin American Popular Theater*. In Brazil, they explain, the meeting of African cultures with native American and European cultures resulted in the creation of syncretic rites that draw on the dramatic traditions of all three groups. Some of these examples of performance draw upon the “inversion of ritual proper” during festival which serves as a “permissive factor,” enabling the “free expression of marginal cultures.”⁹³ Folkloric performances of intangible heritage fall into this category and are accurately described by the passage above given that many performances in Bahia sought after by roots tourists are staged in public places and connected to religious practice. Some of these performances that contain a high level of staged authenticity potentially lie at an intersection between popular theater in Latin America and Brazilian roots tourism. Some of these performances could have at one time been a medium for the affirmation of cultural identity of marginal groups, but now, according to Weiss and Damasceno, are often little more than objectified and commodified shells of religious culture. Weiss and Damasceno also note that “the very process of the formation of nationality could be cited as one explanation for this folklorization...The commercialization of [hemispherically]

⁹² Judith A. Weiss with Leslie Damasceno et al. 1993. *Latin American Popular Theatre*. 68-69.

⁹³ Ibid. 69-70. I will recycle the term “ritual proper” in chapter three to refer to the three days (August 13-15) that feature the sisters of the Sisterhood of Good Death in their public religious rituals.

African-American and [hemispherically] Native American ‘folklore’ is virtually simultaneous with the recognition of marginal cultural forms and the reduction of these forms to sanitized versions of the exotic Other.”⁹⁴ These scholars identify that the formation of a cohesive nation-state identity, in this case *Brazilidade* (Brazilian-ness), causes the objectification and commodification of religious culture. As a result of this folklorization, the cultural forms of marginalized people within that society are recognized for their inherent value while at the same time being decentralized and sanitized, more easily consumable by tourists. I agree with Weiss and Damasceno concerning this phenomenon of increased visibility through folklorization of cultural forms, especially of marginalized people, and the reduced complexity of the same cultural forms for the benefit the tourist gaze. We should note, though, that while this phenomenon does occur with great frequency, Brazilian roots tourism performances also upend the phenomenon by challenging the objectification and commodification, especially of religious practices (i.e., The Festival Good Death discussed in chapter three).

1.2.2 Sex tourism, Black pain, and *Ginga*

In effort to move beyond the categories usually written about (such as music, dance and carnival), scholars have turned their attention to more controversial topics such as sex tourism. Erica Lorraine Williams in *Sex Tourism in Bahia* notes how the Brazilian state of Bahia exploits desire of tourists for the “exotic” by the exploitive presenting of Blackness and Afro-Brazilian-ness deployed as hypersexualized *Baianidade* (Bahian-ness) to foreign travelers. She notes in her anthropologic ethnographic work that sex tourism is not one-dimensional but instead a complex

⁹⁴ Ibid. 70-71

and multi-dimensional phenomenon that involves a range of activities and erotic encounters. Williams' accounts stand in stark relief to the commonly held beliefs that all sex workers in Bahia are Black, female, and engage solely in commercial exchanges. Her work complicates these notions by presenting a myriad of what she calls, "ambiguous entanglements."

Similarly, the work of Gregory Mitchell in *Tourist Attractions* centers on Brazil's sexual economy. His book highlights the racialized masculinity that is performed in the variety of exchanges that take place in homosexual sexual encounters of all types. Seeking to reframe prostitution as labor that is performative, Mitchell examines the perception of tourists and of sex workers in their engagement with performed Brazilian-ness, Black-ness, and Indigenous identities.

Both *Sex Tourism in Bahia* and *Tourist Attractions* take a controversial topic of sex work and give more nuanced examinations of the experiences, reasons behind, dangers, and messy definitions of the lived experiences for all involved. Both works also seek to examine globalization's transnational exchanges and the unequal power relationships that are an inherent part of twenty-first century tourism. Although roots tourism and heritage tourism in Bahia is by no means controversial in the same way that sexual exploitation and sexual ambiguities are, my work (with tourism encounters) mirrors the work of Mitchell and Williams. I seek to complicate how we think about Black people's experiences with performances of culture within tourism encounters. Beyond the critique that such encounters are not real, because authenticity is staged, there lies a potential that performance unleashes: the emancipatory possible.

Christen A Smith's *Afro-Paradise* argues that the duality of celebrated Black bodies and connected state repression supports Brazil's racial hierarchy. She concludes that grassroots organizations and art exposes this relationship by undoing illusions and provoking unwelcome questions about the impact of state violence performed against the still-marginalized mass of Afro-

Brazilians. According to Smith, “tourists exult in Bahia, Brazil as a tropical paradise infused with the Black population's one-of-a-kind vitality. But the alluring images of smiling Black faces and dancing Black bodies masks an ugly reality of anti-black authoritarian violence.”⁹⁵ Smith writes about grassroots social justice focused theater troupe in their protestations against racial violence (which she deems to be both institutional and performative). Therefore, Smith notes, “economies of Black pain and suffering form the backdrop for the staged, scripted, and choreographed afro-paradise that dazzles visitors.”

Cristina Rosa's *Brazilian Bodies, and their Choreographies of Identification* examines *ginga* (sway). *Ginga* is a particular way of swaying the body that commonly believed to be distinctly “Brazilian.” Ross believes that its presence across distinct movement practices: *samba-de-roda* (samba-in-a-circle) dances, *capoeira* Angola games, and the repertoire of certain performance troupes are part of what she calls “fixed choreographies of national identification.”⁹⁶

1.2.3 Roots Tourism and Performance in Brazil

Patricia de Santana Pinho has written several works about the role of Brazilian heritage within US-African American roots tourism. Her articles, "African-American roots tourism in Brazil" in *Latin American Perspectives* and “Brazil in the Map of Africanness: Examining Roots Tourism and International Black Relations” from *Brazil and the Americas*, explore how Bahian cultural production influences and is influenced by Black diasporic cultures and the idealization

⁹⁵ Smith, Christen A. *Afro-Paradise: Blackness, Violence, and Performance in Brazil*. University of Illinois Press, 2016.

⁹⁶ Rosa, Cristina F. *Brazilian Bodies and their Choreographies of Identification: Swing Nation*. Springer, 2015.

of Africa. This idealization of Africa draws US-African American tourists wanting to learn about their heritage.

Pinho's *Mama Africa* examines the meanings of Africa in the constructions of Black-ness in Bahia. Central to the Bahian constructions of Black-ness is "the myth of Mama Africa." According to Pinho, this is the idea that Africa exists as a supposedly nurturing spirit inside every Black person. She analyzes conceptions of Black-ness and describes how Africa is re-inscribed on the body through clothes, hairstyles, and jewelry. Black-ness is therefore reclaimed as a source of beauty. Pinho asserts that the, "myth of Mama Africa implies that Black appearances have corresponding Black essences." She argues that such ideas of essential Black-ness (such as being naturally gifted in music and dance), "render black culture increasingly vulnerable to exploitation by the state and commercial interests." She adds to that argument that the myth of Mama Africa, "while informing oppositional black identities, overlaps with a constraining notion of Bahian-ness promoted by the government and the tourist industry."⁹⁷

Pinho's chapter entitled "Bahia is a Closer Africa: Brazilian Slavery and Heritage in African American Roots Tourism" from *African Heritage and Memories of Slavery in Brazil and the South Atlantic World*, explores the African American tourist gaze. She points to a relationship between this specific tourist gaze and the myths of racial harmony promoted by Bahia's tourism industry.

⁹⁷ *Mama Africa: Reinventing blackness in Bahia.*

1.3 WHY TOURISM?

Tourism scholar Dean MacCannell has this to say about tourism, utopias, and difference:

Whether or not tourism, on a practical level (or philosophy at the level of theory), can ever be a “utopia of difference,” ultimately depends on its capacity to recognize and accept otherness as radically other. To me, this means the possibility of recognizing and entering dialogue, on an equal footing, with forms of intelligence absolutely different than my own...If the tourist simply collects experiences of difference (different peoples, different places, etc.), he will emerge as a miniature clone of the old Western philosophical Subject, thinking itself unified, central, in control, universal, etc., mastering otherness and profiting from it. But if the various attractions force themselves on consciousness as obstacles and barriers between tourist and other, that is, objects of analysis, if the deconstruction of the attraction is the same as the reconstruction of authentic otherness (another person, another culture, another epoch) as having intelligence that is not our intelligence, then tourism might contribute to the establishment of a utopia of difference.⁹⁸

A tourism encounter can go many ways. It is not a foregone conclusion that simply by traveling to a faraway destination will create conditions that enable utopian or emancipatory experiences. MacCannell writes about the “possibility of recognizing and entering into dialogue” with different forms of intelligence. I take this to be akin to ways of being and knowing. The acknowledgment of and respect of other ways of being and knowing is predicated upon “recognizing and entering into a dialogue on equal footing.” MacCannell’s theories of tourism encompass the grand spectrum of possible tourism scenarios, whereby roots tourism is necessarily only one of many possibilities. The focus of this dissertation being Brazilian roots tourism performance, distinguishes the roots tourists and the performances they encounter as examples of tourists interacting with intelligences absolutely different from their own. Ultimately, MacCannell’s utopia of difference is dependent upon recognizing and respecting otherness. In his book, *The Tourist*, he famously avoids questions about “utopia of difference,” specifically whether tourism liberates consciousness or enslaves it,

⁹⁸ MacCannell. *The Tourist*. xxi.

when tourism is conceived of as a celebration of distance, difference, or differentiation.⁹⁹ For as much sidestepping as MacCannell attempts in his scholarship as to this question, the latter half of the excerpts above provides a distinct differentiation of what may or may not be a utopia of difference. If the tourist merely collects experiences without true engagement or acknowledgment of the other (people and places she encounters), she will just be *taking*. In a taking relationship, as it pertains to tourism, the power dynamics of global inequities always repeat and self-reinforce. This is what MacCannell calls a miniature clone of the “old Western philosophical Subject.” This individual tourist is unable to see beyond their own subject position, thinking of themselves as the universe, thus exemplifying all of the ugliness that privilege affords. Conversely, MacCannell presents an opposite experience, one where “various attractions force themselves on consciousness.” This consciousness is the explicit differentiation between the tourist and the Other. This wedge that exists between the tourist and the Other are objects of analysis according to MacCannell. By acknowledging the existence of these obstacles and barriers (that become objects of analysis) between the tourist and the Other, such distancing stands in opposition to merely collecting experiences. It cannot be merely taking, when the deconstruction of those objects of analysis are the reconstruction of authentic Otherness. Put more simply: in attempting to dissect and understand or contextualize her experience, a tourist acknowledges that a difference exists between herself and the Others that she has encountered.

This difference between the tourist and the Other can be a performance. I see this as a possibility because in MacCannell’s description of the deconstruction of the attraction (of the object of analysis; difference) and simultaneous reconstruction of authentic otherness as a result

⁹⁹ MacCannell’s use of “utopia of difference” is based on the writing of Georges Van den Abbeele. Calling the phrase “energetic,” MacCannell does his best to avoid arguing for or against it. Georges Van den Abbeele. “Sightseers: The Tourist as Theorist,” *Diacretics*. vol 10. 1980. 2-14.

of “an intelligence that is not [the tourist’s] intelligence,” tourism could possibly contribute towards the establishment of utopian difference. Performance is world making. Performance therefore could be the world(s) between the tourist and the Other (embodied through movement, dance, theater, and tangible as well as intangible heritage). The world(s)/performances are sites of analysis, and in certain circumstances tourists engage with what attracted them to that place, people, and, performance, while simultaneously recognizing that the authenticity of the Other was encountered as a different way of being and knowing. In the case of Brazilian roots tourists and the performances encounter, MacCannell’s utopia of difference is similar to the emancipatory possible.

Roots tourism is also sometimes called diasporic pilgrimage. In writing about diasporic pilgrimage in relation to Israeli birthright tourism, Shaul Kelner explains,

Yet difference alone is not the entire source of attraction, for homelands are also gazed on not solely as a signifier of the Other but also as a signifier of the Self. They hold out the promise of encountering difference within similarity, as well as similarity in spite of difference. In this dialectic resides homeland tourism’s power as a locus for mediation on the meanings of diasporic identities.¹⁰⁰

Kelner goes on to explain further that the recognition of similarity is preempted before becoming true identification, what Kelner calls the “Other-which-itself.”¹⁰¹ This occurs because the tourist gaze is an opposing force that maintains a separation between tourist as observing subject and homeland that is being observed. Tourism therefore is able to bring together those that are separated by geographic distance, yet there are cognitive and symbolic boundaries that remain. Kelner notes that this is a contradiction that lies at the heart of birthright tourism, which I extend to roots tourism as well.

¹⁰⁰ Shaul Kelner. 2010. *Tours that Bind: diaspora, pilgrimage, and Israeli Birthright Tourism*. 10.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

Kelner, similar to MacCannell writes of attraction(s). Kelner in the previous block quote identifies that difference alone is not the entire “source of attraction.” The homeland or birthright tourist seeks geographies and encounters that have meaning not only in connection to the Other, but also to themselves. MacCannell establishes that attractions force themselves onto consciousness, creating barriers. These barriers (as per MacCannell), I argue, are a productive byproduct of what Kelner identifies as the “opposing force of the tourist gaze.”¹⁰² Kelner’s comment that recognition of similarity is preempted before becoming true identification (“Other-which-itself”), coincides with MacCannell’s assertion that, “reconstruction of authentic otherness (another person, another culture, another epoch) as having intelligence that is not our intelligence, then [causes] tourism [to possibly] contribute to the establishment of a utopia of difference.”¹⁰³ It is this phenomenon, established by both Kelner and MacCannell, that makes tourism a contested practice, similar to the contested practice of performance. This pairing of contested tourism practices and performance is where my emancipatory possible emanates from.

Furthermore, as I will address in chapter four, I extend my use of tourism as both theoretical understanding and chosen site analysis to include social justice initiatives. In the fourth chapter, I will address possibilities for the use of digital ethnography towards social justice goals in order to increase the emancipatory possible, which is in situ, and never a foregone conclusion (given that consciousness is temporary). At this juncture, I do wish to point out another function of tourism as it relates to social entrepreneurship, specifically by highlighting the work of Aziz Abu Sarah.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ MacCannell. *The Tourist*. xxi.

Aziz Abu Sarah is a social entrepreneur and co-founder of MEDJI Tours, a social tourism enterprise aimed at fostering peace in the global mid-East region.¹⁰⁴ On his TED profile, he explains why he engages in this work,

I grew up angry and bitter — a person seeking revenge. My brother Tayseer was arrested at 18 years old, beaten in prison on charges of throwing stones at Israelis. He died soon after his release. Eight years later when I was 18, I started my path towards reconciliation. Through a Hebrew class I met Jews who weren't soldiers for the first time. I realized that we have built walls of ignorance and fear between us. Since then, I decided to dedicate my life to bringing down this wall. My social enterprise MEJDI Tours does it through tourism — tours with an Israeli & Palestinian guides leading tours together. The travelers explore all narratives and stories. An American Jewish group staying with Palestinian refugees, Muslim travelers having their first shabbat dinner at a Jewish Orthodox family's home in Jerusalem. We still explore the sites and have leisure time. This model is being replicated in Ireland, Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and others.¹⁰⁵

In this example Abu Sarah is using tourism as a social justice venture through social entrepreneurship. He reports that his goal is to “bridge the gap,” by increasing interaction between people in Gaza. He does this in order to intervene in the pervasive apathy of both peoples, Israelis and the Palestinians. This example is taking place in a conflict zone, where the tourism is serving a very specific goal, to increase understanding and reduce the divisions created by war in geopolitical inequity. This example is not roots tourism, Heritage tourism, birthright tourism, or difference seeking tourism for the purposes of pleasure and or leisure. The work of Abu Sarah is to create opportunities for a type of tourism that links individuals already linked by the insidious

¹⁰⁴ Aziz Abu Sarah is a social entrepreneur and educator. He leads tours in which Jews, Muslims, and Christians cross contested borders to spend time in each other's cultures. Aziz Abu Sarah is a National Geographic Explorer and a 2014 TED fellow [TED is a nonpartisan nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks.]. In 2009, he co-founded MEJDI Tours, a social enterprise that aims to foster peace in the Middle East. MEJDI Tours started by sending tourists to Jerusalem with two guides, one Jewish and one Palestinian, each offering a different history and narrative of the city. MEDJI has now expanded to Iran, Turkey and other regions experiencing cultural conflict. He is a former executive director of George Mason University's Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution. In 2013, Abu Sarah hosted Conflict Zone, a Web series for National Geographic. His writing has been published in The New York Times, Haaretz, the Jerusalem Post, Al Arabiya and others. <https://www.npr.org/2016/04/22/474847994/how-can-tourism-promote-peace-in-the-middle-east>

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

condition of generational enmity. Yet, while there is seemingly no overlap between the work of MEDJI Tours, and Brazilian roots tourism agencies such as YourWorld travel, I see several.

Firstly, both are seeking to have an effect and to elicit social change. While offering pleasurable experiences, the primary aim of both tourism agencies is to provide educational programming. Secondly, both MEDJI Tours and YourWorld travel engage in creating experiences for the forging of connections and networks based on ethnicity. Abu Sarah attempts to connect seemingly disparate worlds between people of an embattled Jewish nation-state and an occupied Muslim territory, who are linked by conflict over a simultaneous claim of a common geography. The Afrocentric roots tourism engaged in by Willard Taylor of YourWorld travel attempts to link geographically separated populations for whom the connection lies outside of their identification with their respective nation-state. Brazilian roots tourists consider themselves members of the African diaspora, connected by an international African-ness, at the core of their identity. While the individuals involved may differ, the tourism agencies are attempting to create links between people and the geographies predicated on essentialized notions. For members of the African diaspora, the essentialized notion is that of the myth of Mama Africa, unprovable and unlikely from a sociological perspective, but no less powerful from a performance perspective. Similarly, Israelis and Palestinians are being connected by Abu Sarah and his MEDJI Tours based on specific commonalities that exist outside of their national identification. For MEDJI Tours the goal is to connect and bridge the gap between enemies based, I argue, on the identification by both populations with peace and justice, rather than what country their passports say they are from. Thirdly, both the tourism agencies espouse sustainability as the cornerstone of their business and social ventures. Both agencies and, by proxy, their types of tourism, engage in the creation of networks that have the potential to expand. This expansion is expected to be outward (in the

present) as well as continued (internationally), towards the aim of making small positive changes in the lived experience of marginalized people.

In the American hemisphere, as in many places around the world, hemispherically-African Americans [thinking of both US-African Americans and Afro-Brazilians] continue to be marginalized; a state of inequity also exists between both parties given that global inequity favors the United States. But here too there is a similarity between the Israeli-Palestinian tourism example and Brazilian roots tourism example: a state of inequity exists for Palestinians when Israel (under the auspices of protecting its citizens) occupies Gaza and builds settlements there, in addition to that fact that no accord has been reached on a two-state solution. The stakes of such an unequal relationship, in terms of human lives lost, is extreme. The stakes are high for both Israelis and Palestinians, given that civilians in the occupied territory are often brutalized by Israeli soldiers, while at the same time Israeli settlers (and soldiers) are often the victims of bombings and rocket attacks by Islamists (outside of the official control of the Palestinian Authority). Abu Sarah and his MEDJI Tours attempt to bridge this gap created by enmity and violence through sustainable business models of tourism that gives both sides of the conflict a voice during tourism encounters, complicating essentialized notions (held by either side).

The inequity bridged by Brazilian roots tourism is similar to the example I just gave because the state of enmity exists between Black people in their respective nation-states (in the cases of the United States and Brazil). These two examples do not match up exactly given that the stakes are disproportionately high in Gaza as compared to Brazil/United States. The similarity I see exists in that Afro-descendant people in the United States and Brazil continued to be brutalized and victimized in often state sanctioned abuse by law enforcement. In the United States, young Black men and women fear for their lives (at times) if stopped by law enforcement for routine civil

infractions. Similarly, in Brazil, over policing of poor Black neighborhoods often leads to deaths of impoverished Afro-Brazilians. In both United States and Brazil these instances of disproportionate state-sanctioned violence against Afro-descendant populations are exacerbated by legal structures that exonerate officers in the majority of cases. The Brazilian roots tourism examples in this dissertation highlight attempts to bridge the gap between these two embattled populations: Afro-descendants of Brazil with their counterparts in the United States. They are not in enmity against each other, they are each living in nation-states where people that look like them are dying at disproportionate levels due to violence. Brazilian roots tourism therefore attempts to build bridges of networking, based on similarities of marginalization, that can hopefully lead to social change through solidarity. The Israeli-Palestinian case differs from this in that the two sides are against each other, at least at the governmental level. MEDJI Tours is attempting to make small incremental social justice changes through individual networking opportunities, such as linking tourists from both sides in order to make apparent their common interest in peace and coexisting together. I imagine this is done in the hopes that if you bridge enough individuals, the collective society will begin to change incrementally.

This is where I see most similarity in the two cases, the idea of bridging individuals with the hopes of affecting change a societal level, even in the face of overwhelming forces against this happening. Abu Sarah is undeterred by the enormity of the task and chooses instead to focus on increasing the sustainability of social justice change through tourism. Abu Sarah offers further insight into his views relating to sustainability,

Social change on a large scale is only possible when change becomes integrated into the day-to-day life of the community. It has been proven in many cases around the world that trade and business lead to peace between bitter enemies. This is a sustainable model for social change. However, businesses must be provided with an incentive in order for such ventures to be successful because they are considered "risky" by many. The incentives could be in different forms including tax breaks, deregulation, and financial aid. Such ventures must include true partnerships between the two sides; otherwise, failure is likely. The success of these projects

could create a domino effect and encourage others to pursue similar work. They also serve to create a model of coexistence for the communities targeted...Innovating ideas for social change through business models that contribute to solving conflicts around the world. I am passionate about the role of tourism in creating an interconnected world.¹⁰⁶

I am passionate about the role of tourism in creating an interconnected world as well. I'm especially passionate about the possibility that encounters within tourism (specifically performances) can create utopian and emancipatory possibilities. Aziz Abu Sarah's arguments for sustainable models of social change coincide with his call for businesses to be provided with incentives in the forms of tax breaks or financial aid. He asserts that trade and business can lead to peace between bitter enemies, referring to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Yet this is not dissimilar to the enmity felt between Afro-descendant people and the societies they live in. In the United States, one way this manifests itself in the current moment is the killing of unarmed Black men and the exoneration of officers of the state who claim self-defense, many times due to implicit bias, but whose actions are unfortunately sanctioned by societal lack of empathy coupled with institutional racism. In Brazil, this manifests itself through continued violence against Black bodies, while simultaneously celebrating Afro-descendancy as the quintessence of *Brasilidade* (Brazilian-ness). Both the Israeli-Palestinian example and Afro-Brazilian example of tourism share the goal of creating models of coexistence for the communities targeted: Israelis and Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and Black people in United States and/or Brazil (in relation to structure of authority), respectively. Aziz Abu Sarah's social entrepreneurship tourism model does this by coupling an Israeli and a Palestinian tour guide to give both perspectives in concert as tourists consume the sites of Gaza through their touristy gaze. The Brazilian tourism I am highlighting in this dissertation attempts to accomplish these goals through performance:

¹⁰⁶ Aziz Abu Sarah profile. <https://www.ted.com/profiles/2246249>

encounters between Afro-descendant communities (Girls for a Change), and Afro-descendant and non-Afro-descendant communities (Festival of the Good Death).

1.4 NETWORKS + PAN-AFRICANISMS

I interviewed the managing partner for YourWorld travel, Willard Taylor, on topics of networks and networking. His thoughts are illuminating:

And I saw YourWorld not as tourism but as an educational institution...And I began to develop educational programs and marketing them as tourism...Putting people of African descent together and bring them together and then under that- because under the guided tourism – you can do a lot of things in the guided tourism...I included the educational part but also continued on with the networking ‘cause networking is extremely important in these days and times as it was then [when YourWorld began in the 1970s]...And so, we began to develop the educational programs. I got involved with the institution in Brazil like the Steve Biko Institute went to that when Steve Biko was first founded, we got involved. But, working with the Steve Biko Institute, Silvio [Former Executive Director of Steve Biko Institute] has been over here a couple of times and so that exchange has gone well. By marrying networking and the educational programs, we are taking many of our plans, our educators. As a result, we’ve brought Biko students over here. Some of our clients have opened up ways for Biko students to come both scholarships to the United States. Some of them made donations. That’s Jeremiah Wright from United Church of Christ and they’ve been going to Brazil with us now for, like, 20 years. It made, you know, really significant donations to the Steve Biko Institute. And that’s happening outside of YourWorld, you see? But, that’s what we’re about...And I could give you several examples. There’s another example when...I think, it was a religious organization that donated computers, you see? But, once we introduced them to Biko, those relationships I established directly between their institution and Biko, we have done our work as YourWorld, see?...We have introduced them, sat at the table with them to make sure, you know, everything, you know, everybody understands, everybody clearly- both sides understand what we’re doing, YourWorld is doing. And they would be the otherwise, and you know we all had the same vision. But, once they made the connection between the two of them, that we stepped back because our work is done. We need to continue to move and establish more networks and more networks, you know, and bringing the people there...Well, we see that as an essential part of the need for – we as people of African descent – to network throughout the world. And if you look at where we are, not just to the Caribbean and South America and the United States, but to North America, but we need to network and become closer. And a lot of that- let me back up. I don’t to be that vague...A lot of our culture was destroyed in the Middle Passage in that process. We need to reestablish those networks among us throughout the world. A lot of our culture is still present, but we don’t know it’s there.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Willard Taylor. Personal Interview. 17 November 2017.

Mr. Taylor sees the work of YourWorld travel as a combination between educational programming and networking. He explained that at the beginning of his tenure with YourWorld travel organization in the early 80s, to his transition to becoming managing partner in the mid 90s, he saw the goals of YourWorld Travel as is not merely tourism, but rather “educational programs and marketing them as tourism.” YourWorld Travel attempts to bring people of African descent together. Networking, thus, is seen as an integral part of YourWorld Travel’s mission. The resulting examples of exchanges such as the former director of the BIKO Institute coming to the United States. Or the United Church of Christ developing a relationship with that same institute and traveling there for 20 years, or various scholarships to study in the United States for students in the Biko Institute. These examples serve as anecdotes for Willard Taylor’s company. They are anecdotes of success and he speaks of them with pride.

Willard Taylor and YourWorld Travel introduces people and the organizations they represent by proxy to other people and other organizations; the common denominator is the focus on African descendent individuals and organizations. Once that connection is made and the network expands, Willard (and YourWorld Travel by proxy), steps back. At that point, Willard reports, YourWorld Travel must “keep moving,” keep doing the work that their networking vision calls them to do. The goal is clearly to “move,” by establishing more and more networks to bring people together in Brazil.

Networks here, in Willard Taylor’s outlook and experience, are the means and the ends. Networking throughout the world by people of African descent is seen as an essential need that is filled and constantly expanded by the efforts of Willard Taylor and his company. As expanding and expansive as these networks are meant to be, the vision here is that these networks will allow African descendant people to become closer. I see this closeness as literal and metaphorical. It

becomes literal when these individuals are meeting each other in the same spaces, experiencing the same intangible heritage, participating in the same roots tourism encounters. Yet, it is metaphorical in that this closeness will continue beyond the time that they are in Brazil, after the tourists disperse and return to their various home bases.

This impulse of Willard Taylor and the vision for his company of YourWorld Travel is an overt attempt to rectify cultural bonds broken and destroyed during the middle passage. These networks therefore are attempting to reestablish what already *was* (in an imagined sense), to return to an imagined approximation of what existed, and hopefully will exist again. This is a utopian practice. It is a practice of creating worlds based on the identification of loss and emptiness by an entire people. The recognition that this “entire people” is not one monolithic group does not diminish the intent, but rather necessarily complicates it and brings this intent closer to becoming achievable, thereby moving it from imagined to reality. Willard Taylor, his company, and others like him in the field of roots tourism to Brazil or other Afro-descendent tourism locations, do not and cannot represent all Black people everywhere.

This idea of networks is what connects the adult roots tourists I interacted with. For Willard Taylor and YourWorld Travel the networks *are* “the work.” For other roots tourists, those networks give rise to ideas, or create opportunities for collaboration, or feed the soul for their own social justice work (often in fields outside of tourism). Examples include Mrs. Angela Patton and Dr. Ram Bhagat, the co-directors of the Essence of Goddess trip, who I write about in more detail in chapter two. Patton works with young girls in her role as the CEO of the Girls for a Change organization. The trip to Brazil allowed her to create an opportunity for her constituents of young US-African-American women to not only be presented with an opportunity to travel transnationally, but also to go to a place where African descendant people are the majority, and

whose culture (tangible and intangible heritage) can be seen everywhere. For Bhagat, Brazil represents a wellspring spiritual energy that feeds his artistic and social justice endeavors. His organization of Drums No Guns and his workshops on trauma healing circles benefited from the people and rhythms as well as performances he partook of during the Essence of a Goddess trip. Another example is Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates who I discuss in greater detail in Chapter three. She used a prior trip to Brazil in her own social justice theatre work.

Pettiford-Wates reported in an interview with me that she was impacted by some of the serendipity of her travels in Brazil.¹⁰⁸ In the lobby of the hotel she was staying at, she reconnected with her dissertation adviser who she had not spoken to in over a decade. Both of them were there to partake of programming provided by YourWorld Travel. They were drawn to this programming because of the place Brazil holds in the hemispheric imaginary of the Americas. Pettiford-Wates is the creator of a Black acting method known as Ritual Poetic Drama Within the African Continuum. In *Black Acting Methods*, she described Ritual Poetic Drama in the following way:

Ritual Poetic Drama within the African Continuum (RPD) is a tool for artists to access their own individual creative content, potency and power as artists. The methodology engages the artist as a creative entity rather than an imitative one. The process is designed to facilitate the artist's ability to cover their ground, to discover their authentic voice and take responsibility for the contributions they are impelled to make to their community as empowered and engaged creative artists. In creating this model with particular interest toward recognition of cultural identity and perspective as essential in performing arts training, I am engaging in a critical interrogation of arts education and the "traditional" training models within the academy...I ask of the Black performer: Can the dramatic artist be effectively and adequately trained to become a self-determined and self-actualized performer, director, and/or writer empowered to pursue the fullness of their creative potency without the knowledge of their own cultural and spiritual continuum?...RPD has proved effective in facilitating the process of exploring these questions, while centering cultural awareness and exploration of racial identity and authenticity within context as an essential component to the artistic training of the student/artist. RPD is specifically designed from an African-centered perspective with acknowledgment of the formative role the African origins of the dramatic form play in the content and evolution of Western European theatre and theatre forms. RPD is a methodology designed to facilitate self-actualization and empowerment through an exploration of rite of passage journey and the lived experiences that expose the emotional blocks and psychological barriers we build that often

¹⁰⁸ Personal Interview. February 1, 2018.

inhibit our innate creative nature from engaging in the fullness of its potency and/or purpose.¹⁰⁹

She teaches this style of acting to students at her home institution in Virginia as well as other students during her invited teaching workshops. One such invited teaching workshop took place in South Africa, at the University of KwaZulu Natal in Durban, South Africa. Pettiford-Wates taught there for a semester in 2013. She explained to me that the Black drama students that she encountered were alienated from themselves, their history and their potential as a result of having received an education through a western lens that presents art, history, and culture in a “colonial way.” Pettiford-Wates found that her Ritual Poetic Drama method was much appreciated by these predominantly Black South Africans in her class, many of whom were women. She felt that there was a need for Ritual Poetic Drama. She interpreted that this need arose from the students being “disconnected.” The students were disconnected, according to Pettiford-Wates, from their own history, culture, and education, because what they receive (in educational settings) had been framed around colonial understandings. Thus, for Pettiford-Wates, she was in a geography, or in her words “on the land” (on the African continent), that she considers to be the origin location of all dramatic forms. Yet, in her estimation, such primacy is denied in Western (Euro-centric) academic curricula. Her acting style and teaching methodology attempted to help the students connect/reconnect with who they are (“by covering the ground on which they stand”) as a part of their dramatic art creative process.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Tawnya Pettiford-Wates. 2017. “Ritual Poetic Drama within the African Continuum: the journey from Shakespeare to Shange.” Lockett, Sharrell D., Tia M. Shaffer, eds. *Black Acting Methods: Critical Approaches*. New York, NY: Routledge. 122-139.

¹¹⁰ Pettiford-Wates uses the phrase “ground on which I stand” often in conversation about her work. It is an allusion to the 1996 speech of August Wilson given at Princeton’s MacArthur Theater entitled: “The Ground on Which I Stand.”

Pettiford-Wates explained that her trip to Brazil inspired and influenced a spiritual connection for her to her work. Brazil was an affirmation of the African Continuum for her. This affirmation was manifested in the realization that what is needed is “no disconnection” from the “power in the spiritual” by artists. This is referring to not only physical drama [movement] and story drama [texts: written and oral], but the self, the individual performer, especially if that performer is of African descent (or of another marginalized group). Pettiford-Wates also spoke about the feminine power she encountered as a part of the *Boa Morte* festival. She said that feminine power affected her long after, even in her travels to the African continent subsequent to her Brazilian tourism. She said, “the Brazil trip caused me to reconfigure how I saw feminine energy.” Pettiford-Wates was referring to reconfiguring her ability to “see.” See what? See the rituals and practices embedded within the African (cultural) Continuum. She said she had been to the continent of Africa before, yet she had overlooked these elements because she was not connected to them as much as she was after her trip to Brazil. In her work with the students at the university in South Africa, she was helping them recognize the potency and impact of artistic expression through a vessel that was truly engaged (their own, on their own terms, valuing their own history).

This is a practice outside of European or colonial formulas such as the “well-made play.” Pettiford-Wates explains that for these student actors, Ritual Poetic Drama, fosters a recognition of power through their own spirit and authentic self: an authentic self that is connected to the geography and place “on which they stand.” This was a powerful and moving aspect of Pettiford-Wates’ transnational networking. She saw her acting method and artistic approach as emanating from the very place (the literal and metaphorical land) where she was teaching students who had been disconnected from their own sense of self.

This work did not come about solely because of her trip to Brazil. Pettiford-Wates has been working on the development of her Black acting method (and theatre generally) for decades. The trip to Brazil liberated and validated notions of spiritual power and feminine power of what she calls the African Continuum. I see her reference to this African Continuum as another example of networks—networks that exist not only in our present time across hemispheres and continents, but also transtemporally, networks that can restore human creativity and artistry (through drama) in order to rectify the disconnection of the middle passage.

Pettiford-Wates' work in Ritual Poetic Drama in the United States (and abroad) is her way of bringing about change. It is her way of mending what has been broken. Willard Taylor and YourWorld travel aim to reestablish networks in order to mend what has been broken as well. Pettiford-Wates' becomes an anecdote and example of the effect those networks can have beyond Brazil as a result of roots tourism performance. Additionally, Pettiford-Wates reports that the network(s) she created in South Africa continue to grow, through work on facilitating acting classes, dramatic arts programming, and community arts (both online and live). She has been asked to communicate through virtual learning with additional students beyond those she taught directly. One of the students from her 2013 class graduated college and worked to develop a community arts program based on Ritual Poetic Drama that is serving LGBTQ+ youth in South Africa. This is an example of the expanding network mentioned by Mr. Willard Taylor.

In the four examples, Angela Patton, Tawnya Pettiford-Wates, Ram Bhagat and Willard Taylor, networks are at the center of the effects they wish to have on the world—effects that are meant to uplift people of color generally and African descendant people particularly. These networks at times are the ends, as exemplified in the work YourWorld Travel, or the means, as exemplified in the work of Pettiford-Wates. These international networks and connections among

people of color, and initiatives toward creating more networks, are not new. The impulse is documented by Patricia Pinho (*Mama Africa*) and Anadelia Romo (*The Living Museum*). They trace Pan-African impulses to the work of Marcus Garvey and cultural products such as the television series *Roots* (of the 1970s). What I wish to emphasize here is that these networks are central to roots tourism and by extension social justice. In my project, networks both *inform* roots tourism and are *created* by roots tourism.

I also seek to make a connection between Pan-African networks as a solution to the “disconnectivity” attempting to be addressed by individuals like Pettiford-Wates and Willard Taylor. I argue that disconnected-ness is the problem that these networks are trying to “fix.” But how does that disconnected-ness manifest itself? Two terms come to mind: “double consciousness” and “nervous conditions.” Double consciousness is the two-ness identified in the *Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B. Du Bois. For Du Bois, double consciousness is a peculiar sensation of always having to look at oneself through the eyes of others. He wrote specifically about the two unreconciled strivings and two ideals at conflict inside “one dark body:” being an American and being Black.¹¹¹ This dual split of an Afro-descendant individual is not unique to the United States. In fact, although Du Bois was writing about US-African Americans, his construct applies hemispherically. To be Black and hemispherically-African-American —by virtue of unequal citizenship in any given nation-state of the Americas—is to be steeped in a kind of double consciousness. The difference is in the specific contempt and pity of the nation state that individual finds herself in, as well as a specific moment in time. To the problem of double consciousness, I add the complication of nervous conditions.

¹¹¹ W.E.B. Du Bois. 1989. *The Souls of Black Folk*. 3
Paul Gilroy. 1993. *The Black Atlantic*. 111-116.

The term comes from the award-winning novel *Nervous Conditions*, where the author Tsitsi Dangaremba writes similarly to while going beyond (the limits of) of Frantz Fanon. Dangaremba extends Fanon's postcolonial critique by presenting both patriarchal and colonial domination from a woman's perspective. Dangaremba writes specifically in *Nervous Conditions* (a semi-autobiographical novel) about growing up in colonial Rhodesia (named Zimbabwe after independence in 1980), during a time where a white minority dominated and oppressed a native Black majority population. She opens her narrative in *Nervous Conditions* with a prefaced statement directly drawn from Jean-Paul Sartre's introduction to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. It reads, "The condition of being native is a nervous condition." It clearly the impetus for her title, but also mirrors the character's physical ailments (such as an eating disorder) that match the internalized hate created by the colonial relationship (of viewing oneself through the eyes of another). In this fictional tale, the main character Tambu closes the book by declaring,

For I was beginning to have a suspicion, no more than a seed of suspicion, that I had been too eager to leave the homestead and embrace the 'Englishness'...The suspicion remained for a few days during which time it transformed into guilt...I was young then and able to banish things [referring to the suspicion], but seeds do grow. Quietly, unobtrusively and extremely fitfully, something in my mind began to assert itself, to question things and refuse to be brainwashed, bringing me to this time when I can set down this story. It was a long and painful process for me that process of expansion.¹¹²

For the main character Tambu, this moment comes at the end of an origin story. It is a hopeful and utopian reflection of growth, recognition. It is also an acknowledgment that it is only the beginning of her story —just that, a beginning. *Nervous conditions*, through the narrative of the main character and her realizations, give a name to the two-ness experienced on the continent of Africa during the latter stages of and immediately after a colonial occupation. The idea of the existence

¹¹² *Nervous Conditions*. 1988. 206-208.

(and naming) of a nervous condition by Dangaremba also expands upon the established marginalization of the Afro-descendant person, presumed to be male in the work of Fanon, by establishing a dual repression of both the colonial condition and patriarchal condition upon the Afro-descendant woman.

Nervous conditions, the term I extrapolate from the novel, run parallel to Du Boisean double consciousness. The former developed out of the relationship of a “native” (in this case Black population) to a white colonizer, and the latter developed from the acknowledgment that society in the Americas causes a split in Afro-descendant people. This split is the manifestation of the disconnect mentioned by the roots tourists and artists that I interviewed and worked with for this dissertation. I argue, therefore, that what the networks, networking, social justice initiatives, Black acting methods, percussion, trauma healing circles, and ever-expanding performance encounters (of Afro-descendent people) are committed to redressing are the “double consciousness” and “nervous conditions” of the present day trans(post)colonial subject.

Double consciousness and nervous conditions are not unique to Black people. It is true that the writing I have referenced and seminal figures who authored them focus specifically on the issues facing African descendant people. Yet, the two-ness recognized by Du Bois is also felt in the United States by marginalized people that are not necessarily Black. Immigrants for example, especially those that cannot pass as European-American, experience a kind double consciousness as a result of their marginalization in society. And the nervous conditions identified by Dangaremba are true anywhere that women can find themselves in a double bind. To be both Black and a woman in any patriarchal society will result in nervous conditions, meaning they are not bound to exist only within experiences of direct colonial rule. The term matches usefully for any

person that is touched by negative effects of modernity/coloniality which is mostly everyone everywhere.

The two case studies that follow are examples Brazilian roots tourism performance. The first one is a detailed account of a group of young US-African-American women being taken to Brazil in order to access their own self-worth and leadership as Black women. I say access, because the stated goal of the programs coordinators was to help these young women tap into a power that is already there —to connect that which has been disconnected. The case study examines one particular day of the 10-day trip, focusing on workshops related to Afro-Brazilian performing arts. The arts engaged in and activities sought after by this roots tourism group exists as a constellation of connected people, places, tangible, as well as intangible cultural activity that is local to Bahia. This local constellation connects to a larger global map of African-ness.

The second case study details and examines one specific place and event in this local constellation within the larger global map of African-ness. I chose this specific place and event based on archival literature and colloquial conversations during field work. In chapter three, I examine the Festival of Good Death, said to be the most Afrocentric experience/performance located in the geography of the most Afrocentric town (Cachoeira) of Bahia (known as Brazil's most Afrocentric state). In both case studies I use adapted auto ethnographic techniques of performance writing and fieldwork to look for the emancipatory possible, my own utopian formulation. It is the name I have given to the doors of possibility that might open up for roots tourist to create worlds and make change for themselves and Others before, during, and after tourism experiences/encounters. The emancipatory possible therefore creates the wiggle room (or small space), where roots tourists can create networks, or use networks towards their own emancipatory and utopian goals.

2.0 *CAPÍTULO DOIS* (CHAPTER TWO)

2.1 **PREFACE TO THE CASE STUDY: ESSENCE OF A GODDESS/GIRLS FOR A CHANGE**

My argument is that the preeminent scholar on roots tourism in Brazil, Patricia de Santa Pinho, overlooks certain factors, when she contends that African Americans seek to exchange their modernity for African traditions.¹¹³ To “exchange” implies that these traveling African Americans can be rid of their specific condition/version of modernity, and that the African traditions they seek are not accessible, simply because they are based on the myth of Mama Africa –Pinho’s term for the idea that Africa exists as a nurturing spirit inside all Black people. This is not true. US-African-Americans can never be rid of the power dynamics that govern their lives in the global north any more than Brazilian Blacks are able to eschew their own country’s discrimination and violence against them.¹¹⁴

Power dynamics of the hemisphere are ever present and ever reinforcing through modernity/coloniality.¹¹⁵ The modernity/coloniality in their own lives is what African Americans

¹¹³ Patricia de Santana Pinho. “African American Roots Tourism in Brazil.” *Latin American Perspectives*. 2008. 70-72.

¹¹⁴ I am countering Pinho’s mention of “modernity” with the construct of “modernity/coloniality.” As a refresher, here is a related quote that explains what I referenced in the introduction: “[Walter] Mignolo articulates the pervasiveness of modernity/coloniality through the metaphor of a matrix, a multifaceted organizational structure that wends its way through ontological and epistemological conceptualizations and practices of self, other, and belonging.”

Lisa Jackson-Schebetta. 2017. *Traveler There is No road: Theatre, the Spanish Civil War, and the Decolonial Imagination in the Americas*. 18.

¹¹⁵ Modernity/Coloniality refers to the work of Walter Mignolo in his seminal work *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*. Modernity/coloniality is part of a complex matrix of power controlled by the West (men and institutions) from the 15th century to the current moment.

feel they are addressing and redressing when they engage in roots tourism. Roots tourists do not single this phenomenon out by name or jargon, but I see a connection in their search for “culture” to remedy the experiences of double consciousness (Du Bois) within a Black Atlantic world (Gilroy). The lived experience of the vast majority of Black people in US America and Brazil, as marginalized minoritarian subjects, is what leads them to search for Africa as tourists and/or present it as locals.

To permanently exchange modernity for African traditions is not possible. Yet, through performance, an exchange of a generative sort can take place. Roots tourism and the tourism encounters engaged in by US-African-Americans, even if based on the Mama Africa myth, can be emancipatory. That is, by engaging in a type of tourism consumption that goes beyond a touristic gaze to include participatory performance, there exists the possibility of this emancipatory exchange. Participatory performances in roots tourism create acts of transfer to make small changes possible. These small changes are what I refer to as the emancipatory possible. These small changes have to do with outlook, state of mind, self-worth, self-consciousness.

Pinho also states in her research that US-African-American roots tourism does not completely invert hemispheric power dynamics. I would agree with this because modernity/coloniality spares no one, anywhere, from its self-reinforcing grasp. Roots tourism challenges traditional north-south flows of cultural exchange, but also confirms existing hierarchies. This is Pinho’s ultimate conclusion.¹¹⁶ My goal is to strengthen this understanding by complicating and adding to it. Towards that end, I argue that performances within roots tourism encounters could be a way to move these challenges (of “traditional north-south flows of cultural exchange”) a bit further, thereby weakening “existing hierarchies.” This comes about by creating

¹¹⁶ Pinho. 2008. 83-84.

possibility. This possibility does not attempt to exchange modernity for an African tradition. Tourists engaging in emancipatory possible performance “do” (referring to the “doing” of tourism) as they recognize the forces at play in the lives of those performing, in addition to themselves. Roots tourists are not deterred by truths of the past or present. They choose to engage these truths actively as evidenced by their travel and impulse to connect hemispherically with the diaspora. They just choose to engage, as a result of being a non-homogenous marginalized group, at what may be considered a lower frequency which includes: dancing, acting, singing, in addition to myth and hope.¹¹⁷

Sociologist Patricia de Santana Pinho and historian Anadelia A. Romo, argue in their scholarship that Bahia’s cultural traditions labeled as “African” are based on the pervasive “myth of Mama Africa” and essentialized notions of Bahia as “essentially rooted in Africa.”¹¹⁸ Anthropologist and African diaspora scholar Christen A. Smith recognizes that the myth of an essential-African-self inside of every Black person (similar to the Mama Africa idea, and Bahia being a Living Museum) perpetuates the idea of a static “original” African way of being.¹¹⁹ Archival and social research shows that this is not the case, being Black or Afro-descendant in the diaspora is not monolithic.¹²⁰ To a performance scholar this makes perfect sense because culture, like art and society, is always changing, influenced by what has come before and what will come after.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ The use of “lower frequency” here is an allusion to Paul Gilroy’s “politics of transfiguration” discussed in my third chapter.

¹¹⁸ Patricia de Santana Pinho. 2010. *Mama Africa: Reinventing Blackness in Bahia*. 1-10.

Anadelia A. Romo. *Brazil’s Living Museum: Race, Reform, and Tradition in Bahia*. 2010. 1-5.

¹¹⁹ Christen A. Smith. 2016. *Afro-Paradise: Black Violence and Performance in Bahia*. 10-15.

¹²⁰ Ibid. 12-14.

¹²¹ Ibid: As a scholar of violence against Afro-descendant people in Brazil, Christen A. Smith combines Diana Taylors concept of *scenario* with Mary Lois Pratt’s concept of *contact zone*. For Smith, scenarios (of racial violence) link one moment in time in the black experience with another. I am not writing about violence, but the transtemporal link exists in my own work and use of performance to study roots tourism in Brazil.

Some participants in roots tourism performances and those presenting their performances are completely cognizant of the inequality involved. The United States does in fact hold a position of prominence when it comes to art and representation of Black people. Individuals from the global north have more access to funds and travel than those from the global South, generally. Still, I contend, the emancipatory possible enacts, and is enacted by, small changes to these unequal relationships.

The small changes I allude to are those which lead to healing intergenerational traumas and legacies of racism in the Afro-descendant peoples of the world.¹²² Such healing is referred to in the writing of African diaspora and heritage tourism scholars Dallen J. Timothy and Victor B. Teye.¹²³ They report that ancestral Homeland tourism has helped some people gain closure and be able to begin the process of healing and forgiveness.¹²⁴ Their work uses trips by US-African-Americans to Ghana, specifically Elmina Castle, in order to point out that visiting sites such as these is a complex issue and needs to be addressed by further research because of the deep personal and emotional connections of heritage tourists. They espouse careful planning, preparation, and training in the management of such tourism sites. Even as they assert the delicate nature of such tourism, Timothy and Teye argue that such tourism is key in helping US-African-Americans make sense of the troubled past and understand themselves from historical perspective. Traveling to Africa helps these tourists assert their heritage (which is traditionally overlooked in the United States) in their ancestral homeland and back at (their current) home. This understanding is echoed

¹²² I borrow the term “traumas and legacies of racism” from *The Color Line* by Ram Bhagat and Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates, an instructional video produced by VCU School of Education in 2013.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZfQ0RFkdc>

¹²³ Dallen J. Timothy and Victor B. Teye. 2004. “American Children of the African Diaspora: Journeys to the Motherland.” *Tourism, Diasporas, Space*. 118-121.

¹²⁴ Timothy and Teye point out that tourists visiting regions they consider to be ancestral homelands is at times referred to by different names; they include: roots tourism, diaspora tourism, genealogy tourism, and/or heritage tourism.

by the work of African heritage scholars Kim Warren and Elizabeth MacGonagle.¹²⁵ They argue that the multiplicity of different African fortes and castles of slavery and varied meanings that are assigned to them by US-African-Americans and Ghanaians often leaves Black tourists feeling upset and dissatisfied. The history of struggle over citizenship rights by African Americans complicates their perception of the constant negotiations facing the diaspora. Yet, the combination of feeling upset or dissatisfied combined with sharing stories of collective trauma and African cultural healing can be generative. It can lead some Black tourists to ask: “What is Africa to me?”; and, “What is US-America to me?” The self-reflexive questioning of what Africa may or may not be to that individual naturally leads to the confrontation of feelings of disappointment with their own country. If this is true with roots tourism to Ghana (in relation to pain), I assert that it can be true of Brazil (in relation to joy).

Such questions by members of the African diaspora are by no means new. They relate to the problem of “the color line” most famously explored by sociologist William Edward Burghardt Du Bois. *Chicago Tribune* columnist Clarence Page asserts that Du Bois prophesied that the problem of the 20th Century was the problem of the color line.¹²⁶ He adds that some believe the color line to be the problem of the 21st-century as well. The way this problem manifests itself in the lives of people of color, according to Page, is in being left behind by society —without safe streets, strong families, education, jobs, or hope. It is hope, Page believes, that is the most valuable tool for upward mobility by marginalized people of color. I share this point of view—which is why I point to an anecdote of Du Bois himself as evidence of the power of hope to foster possible change in the young women that are at the center of this chapter of my dissertation. In *The Black*

¹²⁵ Kim Warren and Elizabeth MacGonagle. 2012. “‘How Much for Kunta Kinte?!’: Sites of Memory & Diasporan encounters in West Africa.” *African Hosts & their Guests: Cultural Dynamic of Tourism*. 94-95.

¹²⁶ *News and Notes*. 2006. “Du Bois, Still Relevant in the 21st Century,” by Clarence Page. Aired February 23, 2006.

Atlantic, sociologist Paul Gilroy relates that Du Bois learned about the codes, rhythms and styles of racialized living when he left the environment he had grown up in (Massachusetts) for Fisk University in Tennessee.¹²⁷ At this place, different than where he was from, Du Bois encountered the art forms that would play a prominent role in his analysis of Black culture. Gilroy asserts that Du Bois took these learning experiences and used them to investigate and understand the social construction of Black identity. Du Bois used his experiences at Fisk with music to grow in his curiosities about his own social condition. It seems reasonable that this curiosity supported his writing of the seminal work *The Souls of Black Folks* and the plentiful scholarship about the Black experience followed. The vast majority of us are not luminaries as Du Bois was. I am not saying that because you listen to specific music or go to a Brazilian dance show that all of a sudden, your understandings of the intricacies of racial bias and systemic racism are awakened (at the level of Du Bois). I am only pointing out that leaving your home, traveling, and encountering art forms can lead to small gains in the lived experiences of any person, including a person who is of the African diaspora.

These small gains can manifest themselves in making it easier (or perhaps more bearable) as a Black youth to grow, develop and flourish in an environment where implicit (and sometimes explicit) racial bias continuously inhibits growth. One such group is Black girls (and adolescents) in United States and the racial bias and institutional racism they endure on their way to becoming Black women. The small gains of Brazilian roots tourism for this specific population (of non-homogenous) heritage tourists, young Black girls, could be the “hope” that Clarence Page feels is the most valuable tool for upward mobility by marginalized people of color. Or, it could be the self-reflexive questioning of: “What is Africa to me?”; and, “What is US-America to me?” Or, it

¹²⁷ Paul Gilroy. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. 115-117.

could be taking the learning experiences of roots tourism and using them to investigate and understand the social construction of Black identity (just as Du Bois did). The possible small gains I just identified are all individual and personal to a single roots tourist. I also contend that these small gains can grow when a tourist travels as part of a learning group. To travel as part of a roots tourism group trip is to create an experience that is communal between you and the small group you are traveling with, as well as the people you meet there (as a group).

Bahia (especially its capital, Salvador) is commonly referred to as a “Black Mecca” or “Black Rome” and sought out as a source of ethnic novelty and a place to access static folklore and traditions. Yet, on a trip such as the Essence of a Goddess trip, the intention of the coordinators (in concert with the efforts of the travel agency) was to find tourism encounters from among the *blocos Afro* (in addition to organizations and artists with similar social justice goals) and in doing so to navigate (a small part of) the global and regional map of Africanness towards generative ends. This differs from seeking novelty and static tradition because the *blocos Afro* are always involved in projects and programming that devoted to the betterment of conditions of Black people in Bahia. These organizations do not traffic in presenting “static” anything. Their authenticity lies in their relationship to Bahia and the social projects they create for the betterment of the lives of Bahia’s Black population. *Blocos Afro* do offer, at times, folkloric themes in their work, but these are never static. To do tourism in this way, a way enables the emancipatory possible, is to do tourism with the intention of looking for and respecting traditions of and by Afro-descendant people without marking them a static “ethnic novelty” to be gazed at and uncritically engaged with. This foreign US-African-American young women’s group went to Brazil to learn about Black Brazilian figures of the past and to be surrounded by darker skinned people, to have a freeing experience. On such a trip, participating through simulation, embodied mimicking and embodied

improvisation created the opportunity for the emancipatory possible, for small changes in outlook, states of mind, world knowledge. In this chapter I focus my case study of Essence of a Goddess and the individuals involved on what I am calling “the workshop day.” Note that the emancipatory possible is not a tangible, quantifiable outcome per se. It is an ephemeral growth possibility, that can be apprehended and documented through acts of transfer in performance (i.e. embodied participation, simming, mimicking, etc). The emancipatory possible is an individual’s potential growth outcome from having participated in a communal performance event.

I argue that *samba* and *capoeira* (contextualized by other participatory elements of the workshop day) provided acts of transfer –through the body, through movement. This performance makes change possible, shifting the frame, complicating Pinho, and paving the way for the emancipatory possible through participation. Because “beliefs and conventions are passed on through bodily practices,” engagement in *samba* and *capoeira* corporeal movement can transmit a sense of identity through reiterated actions.¹²⁸

2.2 IN THEIR OWN WORDS: THREE YOUNG WOMEN

I am focusing on *samba* and *capoeira* because they are movement/performance forms that are marked as Afro-Brazilian. They are designated as “Afro-Brazilian” through official nation-state tourist promotion as well as local colloquial explanations in Bahia. These two forms of performance are presented as intangible heritage that represents Bahia’s connection to Africa. Much of that connection is oversimplified as a result of the myth of Mama Africa. Nonetheless,

¹²⁸ Diana Taylor. 2016. *Performance*. 32.

the art forms of *samba* and *capoeira* include movements that allow participatory performance to take place. There is power in physicality—in the moments that the young women engaged in. Some of the power of that physicality was echoed by the girls themselves when I interviewed them one-year later. This is what they said:

Young woman S was eight years old, about to turn nine. One year after the trip, she said,

Well, I thought it was- well, like, I didn't know what- I heard of Capoeira before I went on the trip and we and then I saw that Capoeira was like an art and we learned how to do, like, the poses and stuff. I didn't really know how to do it, but it was cool. I liked when we did the drums. That was my favorite one, I think, because I like 'cause I always, like, my dad and I we have in our house we have these drums and when I was little I used to play the drums in my house. Yes. 'Cause when we were out, like, at festivals and stuff, we always see these drums and they're African drums and we always hear them when we were at festivals and stuff. Like, an African film festival. [And so, you're making the connection between that and where we were in Brazil?] Yes. I also like the dancing. Yes, when we did the steps with the drums and stuff.¹²⁹

Young woman J, an 8th grader, one year later said,

The samba dance class. That was my favorite. Because I usually already dance around the house, in my room, in the car, anywhere. I'm a dancing fool. [chuckle] But, it's just fun to learn different dances, especially when it's coming from other cultures. They have backstories that you may not really know. Some of them lead to people's backstories. Like, different people come from different places, so their dances tell them about who they are and what they are about. Samba dancing, to me, is full of excitement, energy, and just happiness. It was nice. I got to bond with the other girls along with me dancing. [laughter] But, it was fun. I got to catch up on new things with them, I rekindled old friendships, new conversations, different conversations. It was fun. I mean, it was sad that most other girls [that did not travel with group] couldn't get the same experience that we got. But, overall, it was a good experience. And I wish other people were there to get the same excitement and joy that we got to feel.¹³⁰

Young woman K, a ninth-grader, one year later said,

The Capoeira [is what I remember the most]. Yes. Because they were just like fight dancing and then they wanted everybody to join in and everybody was afraid of getting kicked. Yes [I joined in and it was] Scary 'Cause I thought I was going to get kicked [because the kick were very close]. It's a beautiful place to be and it'll certainly open your eyes to a completely new culture. Very important 'cause if you don't get to learn about other people's culture, you're going to be small-minded and ignorant on a lot of things. And that's one of the problems in the

¹²⁹ Personal Interview. 28 August 2017. Name of minor changed for privacy.

¹³⁰ Personal Interview. 28 August 2017. Name of minor changed for privacy.

world. People don't understand people's cultures and don't respect them so they have their own opinions about people 'cause they're not educated. Yes [this experience did open up my mind to other's cultures].¹³¹

2.3 CASE STUDY: ESSENCE OF GODDESS TRIP

The Girls for a Change international trip entitled “Essence of a Goddess” took place between June 21 – June 30 of 2016. Girls for a Change is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering growth in young women of African American descent. It is a national organization, and although young women of all ethnicities are allowed and encouraged to be a part, the mission statement is purposefully dedicated to young Black women of adolescent years and younger. That statement explains further that, “Girls for a Change’s mission is to support Black girls and other girls of color and inspire them to visualize their bright futures and potential through discovery, development, and social innovation in their communities.”¹³² Angela Patton, the CEO of Girls for a Change, echoes this mission when she describes the organization as being,

...basically an organization that is preparing black girls for the world and the world for black girls. And how we do that is by making sure that we have programs that are for girls of color, but the reason that we specifically work with black girls and are really intentional about it is because we're trying to advance opportunities for them in the 21st century.¹³³

Aside from trips, the organization sponsors a series of summer camps, leadership academies, and after school programs throughout the year. Girls for a Change is known for local programming such as Date with Dad and Camp Diva. Date with Dad is a father-daughter dance held at correctional facilities for the incarcerated men and their daughters to share a special moment.

¹³¹ Personal Interview. 28 August 2017. Name of minor changed for privacy.

¹³² “mission and board.” Girls for a Change, last modified 2016, <http://www.girlsforachange.org/mission-and-board/>

¹³³ Angela Patton, personal interview, August 2017

Camp Diva is a young women's empowerment day camp held in the summer and winter at the Girls for a Change space in Chesterfield, Virginia.

Girls for a Change was motivated to create a trip that specifically took young women to Bahia, Brazil. Prior to the Essence of a Goddess trip, the organization had only sent young women to local, regional, and national programs such as conferences and empowerment seminars. Patton related the origins of how the trip came about:

Well, we saw [international travel] as an opportunity. We actually do "Girl Action Teams." That's one of our many programs. And Girl Action Teams give girls an opportunity to think about issues in their community that they would like to tackle. And then they create a social change project around it. So, these particular issues that girls wanted to tackle, like, about three years ago, had to do with cultural division and also being able to think about how black girls across the globe are seen, how they are not heard and how they are not celebrated. And so, the girls felt like with all of the opportunities that we had for Americans and girls across the globe, why are black girls still left out? Why they still behind? Why don't people see that they can create contributions to the world? Why don't people see them as significant and creating change in the world? And why are they devalued? So, the girls thought that they should have this conversation with other girls across the country that look like them and we just happened to have a conversation with Dr. Ram Bhagat about this social change project that our girls had. And he- because of his relationship to, you know, really uplifting Richmond culturally and also being a father of daughters, thought that this was a very needed project. And so, we collaborated our efforts to think about how we could take girls who wanted to see this social change project happen, you know, come to the forefront...of a project that we could do. We like to implement our girls' projects. And this was an opportunity to do so...It's just that we both had this conversation about what my girls wanted and what he wanted for girls. And he already had a name, like, that's the name, it came from him: "Essence of a Goddess." And we were like, "Okay. Let's try to work it out." I have girls and then he had...He had a trip. So, he said, "Let's try to make it happen."¹³⁴

Patricia de Santana Pinho writes in *Mama Africa*, "It is precisely what seems to have been preserved of Africa in Bahia that attracts an ever-growing number of African American tourists. Since the 1970s, African Americans have traveled to Bahia in search of Africanness."¹³⁵ This came up when Bhagat spoke to me about the name Essence of a Goddess. He said,

I think it's important because for one, the images that are projected upon women and how that impacts younger girls can be damaging, traumatic, and self-deprecating. So, it's about building

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ *Mama Africa*. 50.

up girls, you know? Stress resilience, self-realization, self-actualization, self-awareness and taking them on an experience that would be unforgettable, that would leave an indelible print on their minds, hearts, spirits. And it's timely today because, I mean, our culture here in the United States and other places around the world is still so machismo and patriarchal and suppressive of that divine feminine energy. So, Essence of a Goddess also kind of honors my mom and her commitment to education, commitment to travel, and my daughters and women I interact with. I find myself in a lot of healing spaces where the majority of the participants are females. So, you know, [this trip and projects like it are] something I would like to do again 'cause I think it's important.¹³⁶

I argue that the reason why Bahia was an appealing destination for Girls for a Change is that this trip constitutes an example of African American roots tourism. Yet, often roots tourism in Brazil is written about in terms of older African Americans seeking leisure travel and many instances economic contradictions and the catering of/to tourists.¹³⁷ The older African American tourists are said to usually be well educated and have disposable income to be able to afford travel. Anadelia A. Romo writes in *The Living Museum* that, "the contrast between cultural valorization and economic deprivation of Black Bahians could not be more stark."¹³⁸ Romo is referring to Bahian laws requiring local street vendors to look "authentic" for tourists and also the simultaneous valorization of Afro-Bahian culture while disregarding the lives and conditions of Afro-Bahians. Patricia de Santana Pinho writes in her 2008 article for *Latin American Perspectives*, "The search for African *roots* is certainly the most important motive for African Americans' visiting Bahia...they usually travel in groups organized by agencies and follow pre-established itineraries...Most of the groups I observed were mainly made up of women and retired liberal professionals."¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Personal Interview. Bhagat.

¹³⁷ *Visiting the Living Museum*. 7, 153,155; *Mama Africa*. 7-8, 24, 52-55; "African American Roots Tourism in Brazil." *Latin American Perspectives*. 74-75; *Afro-Paradise*. 61-62; *African Heritage and Memories of Slavery in Brazil and the South Atlantic World*. 2015. 254-257; *Ecstatic Encounters: Bahian Candomblé and the Quest for the Really Real*. 2011. 148.

¹³⁸ Romo. *The Living Museum*. 153.

¹³⁹ Pinho. "African American Roots Tourism to Brazil." 2008. 70.

Pinho acknowledges that African American roots tourism to Brazil is unique because it defies US-centric conceptions of Black-ness as primary in the diaspora. Yet, Pinho's argument is built on three inequities: travel access, exchanging modernity, and access to the means of representation. Her research concludes African Americans with access/ means to travel (that Black Brazilians of Bahia do not have) contributes to existing Black Atlantic inequity and hierarchies. Similarly, the attempt by African Americans to exchange their modernity for local African traditions of Bahia, along with having access to how Africa and the diaspora can be represented, also confirms existing Black Atlantic inequity and hierarchies. She points out that possibilities of challenging traditional hegemonic, hemispheric flows of power and cultural encounters (north-to-south) by this type of roots tourism are always undone by the inescapable inequities of, "unequal access to global currents of power."¹⁴⁰ She is not wrong. Yet, I suggest there is more to the story when you consider performance as a method of studying African American roots tourism and Bahia, Brazil. Within what Pinho notes as "the novelty" of African American roots tourism and the fact that, "to some extent [it] defies...the hegemony of US-centric conceptions of Black-ness," it is performance that can open up that space. The space I am referring to is the space of possibility to create generative experiences from seemingly unequal tourism encounters. Because existing Black Atlantic inequity and hierarchies are a framework that is often repeated and reiterated, performance can act as a crow bar that pries that framework open. Performance's *jogo de cintura* (play in the waist) or wiggle room exists in that "novelty" and potential "extent" of defiance. In the framework's repetition of inequity, performance offers the possibility of change, creativity, and critique.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. 70.

¹⁴¹ Diana Taylor. *Performance*. 2016.15.

This Essence of a Goddess case study complicates the established narrative of older and affluent African American “liberal professional” tourists. In my case study, the African American visitors are young women and their chaperones from Girls for a Change. This is not to say that Pinho’s observations about tourism, tourism’s gaze, and relevant inequities do not apply to my case study. Her observations most certainly do. The United States holds a place of dominance as a center of Black-ness in terms of academic and cultural production. Additionally, there continues to exist unequal global currents of power accessed more easily by those located in the United States and other global north geographies.¹⁴² Although, as Pinho relates, “African-American roots tourism represents a way of reconnecting a fragmented transnational African affiliation,” it also is embroiled within the asymmetrical relations between Blacks in the Americas.¹⁴³ For my work, these inequities are a given and the starting point from which any investigation of performances within tourism encounters must begin. Pinho’s own work alludes to this generative and emancipatory possibility of African American roots tourism, to which I add performance (consumed and participated in). Pinho states, “as an open-ended search, roots tourism carries within it an immeasurable treasure: the challenge it poses to its own geographies of power.”¹⁴⁴ I propose that that immeasurable treasure is the emancipatory possible and performances consumed, and performances participated in, are the access points for those “challenges...to its own geographies of power.”

In this chapter I will first describe how the trip came about. Second, I will detail the trip as whole. Third, I focus on the frame of the tourism encounter. Fourth, the workshop day will be

“Performance, however, is not limited to mimetic repetition. It also includes the possibility of change, critique, and creativity within frameworks of repletion.”

¹⁴² Pinho. “African American Roots Tourism to Brazil.” 2008. 84.

¹⁴³ Ibid. 72

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. 84.

explored. Fifth, I will examine the workshop event in order to find the scenario (drawing from Diana Taylor) within it. And sixth, I will shift that frame with focus on acts of transfer of *samba* and *capoeira*. The goal of this chapter is to present a unique situation that expands current understandings of Brazilian Roots Tourism, whereby performance is being utilized to make change possible.

2.3.1 Transparency, Ethics, and Access

In order to be transparent and ethical in my performance research, the reader of this dissertation should know who I am and the circumstances pertaining to my involvement. Norman K. Denzin explains that, “the writer must be honest with the reader.”¹⁴⁵ I agree with him. Soyini Madison expands on this notion by stating, “in fact, it is this concern for the Other that demands we attend seriously to our position as researchers.”¹⁴⁶ I agree with her too. For Denzin, the writing of ethnographic fieldwork (for what he calls reader-viewers) must presumably be created for individuals seeking honest and reflexive works. For Madison, focusing on the Other is to invite an ethics of accountability. To do so is to be open to the possibility of being proven wrong. In Madison’s work, the Other is all those encountered by the researcher. By telling you how this trip developed, I am being open about who I am as well as how I came to be welcomed by a group of US-African-American travelers to Brazil. In doing so I am forefronting my ethnographic positionality –my subject position alongside engagement and representation of the Other.

¹⁴⁵ Denzin. 2003. 116-117.

¹⁴⁶ Madison. 2005. 8-9.

I was able to go on this trip because of my relationship to Dr. Ram Bhagat.¹⁴⁷ Bhagat is a leader in social justice initiatives. He is an educator from Richmond, Virginia. Bhagat is award-winning in terms of his projects and interventions into the community. He is well-versed in trauma, healing, drumming, and world cultures.

My relationship with Bhagat is a result of our mutual involvement with an organization called The Conciliation Project –a theater arts group dedicated to the healing of the legacies of racism in the United States through dramatic works.¹⁴⁸ He and I worked on several productions of The Conciliation Project and in doing so, became friends as well as work colleagues. Because of this working relationship, Bhagat invited me to participate in a couple of international trips he directed over the years. In one case, I was almost able to go, but funding fell through from the institution where I worked at the time.

For the Essence of a Goddess trip, I first learned of their travel plans from the Girls For A Change GoFundMe page. GoFundMe is a crowdfunding site used for fundraising. As one of Bhagat's artistic collaborators, I am on an email list that received a promotional and fundraising video where the young women from Girls For A Change explained to potential donors why they

¹⁴⁷ “Dr. Bhagat is currently a designer of culturally responsive curricula for urban science education programs. He served 30 years as a science teacher and department head with the Richmond Public Schools. He is an international conflict resolution trainer for the Richmond Peace Education Center (RPEC) and founder of the Richmond Youth Peace Project (RYPP). He is also co-founder and Artistic Director of Drums No Guns (DNG), a world percussion ensemble whose powerful musical imagery and prophetic spoken word inspires citizens of all ages and races. As a community arts leader and world percussionist, Dr. Bhagat is committed to healing emotional trauma through drumming, dance, and drama.”

<https://www.theconciliationproject.org/about1-clsd>

¹⁴⁸ The Conciliation Project aims, “to promote, through active and challenging dramatic work, open and honest dialogue about racism and oppression in America in order to repair its damaging legacy...Our vision is to inspire, inform, and include. We will address and act upon the systems of racism and bias that are woven into the fabric of our communities, our cultures, and country. Building and maintaining community relationships within a broad spectrum of the American experience, we will use ritual poetic drama to serve the greater good of the community through social revelation, transformation, and change...As members of The Conciliation Project, we promote and endorse these values as inherent in our personal and professional lives. As we work toward opening dialogue about Racism in America, it is important that we carry these values through all of our work and live true to our beliefs.” <https://www.theconciliationproject.org/mission-vision-and-values>

wanted to go to Brazil and what they had been doing to prepare for the trip. The girls were learning about Brazil (including basics phrases in Portuguese) as part of their after-school programming. I received the email and video as I was preparing to apply for summer research funding from several different University of Pittsburgh departments and centers. I reached out to Bhagat to see if I would be welcome on the trip, should I be able to secure funding from my institution. He told me that he asked various stakeholders such as Patton and the travel agency coordinating the trip, YourWorld Travel, before he emailed me back acknowledging that I was welcome to join if my funding came through.

As far as access, I was welcomed into the travel group going to Brazil because Bhagat was one of the leaders of the trip. Undoubtedly, being a male, being fair skinned, being non-Black or non-Afro-descendant would have excluded me from such a trip especially because, at this point, I did not yet have a working relationship or friendship with the other director of the trip –Patton of the Girls for a Change organization.¹⁴⁹ I was not yet associated with Girls for a Change and they did not know me, my work, my background, my credentials.

It was Bhagat who proposed my participation to Patton, leader of the young women's group. In doing so he was not only proposing that I come with, but he was also vouching for me.

¹⁴⁹ “As [Girls For A Change] GFAC’s leader, Angela has been recognized in the local Richmond, VA press as a Top 40 under 40, by a coalition of girl serving groups in 2015 identifying Girls For A Change as one of five programs to note, establish a long-term partnership with the NoVo Foundation, and in 2016 by President Obama as A White House Champion of Change for After School programming for Marginalized Girls of Color. Angela is an Ambassador for who she calls “at-promise” (as opposed to “at-risk”) girls and a serial innovator. Angela is committed to “Preparing Black girls for the World...and the World for Black Girls.” Angela founded Camp Diva in Richmond, Va., in 2004, to honor Diva Mstadi Smith-Roan a five-year-old who died in a firearm accident earlier that year. That summer, Angela planned a two-w experience that gave Diva’s mother an opportunity to share her motherly love with girls in need of a support system. The program grew and went national in October 2013, when Camp Diva merged with California-based Girls for A Change (GFAC), a nonprofit through which 100 girls’ groups throughout nation work together to envision and execute lasting change in their neighborhoods, cities, or schools. Patton, is the CEO of the merged organization. In the summer of 2016 Patton lead her board and staff retool the focus and build a program structure to more accurately reflect GFAC’s goal to work with Black girls and to disseminate our programs using a specific, replicable approach.”
<http://www.girlsforachange.org/mission-and-board/>

Another element of my background (beyond my education and credentials in the areas of education and theater arts, and dedication to social justice initiatives) was my relationship to the founder of The Conciliation Project –Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates who is a mentor of mine from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) –where I completed my master’s degree. My work with Pettiford-Wates gave me a special kind of credibility for working with an organization dedicated to young Black women, such as Girls For A Change.¹⁵⁰ The Conciliation Project’s stated goals of repairing the damaging legacies of racism and oppression in the United States through dramatic works and open dialogue is well known in Richmond’s nonprofit and arts community. Additionally, Pettiford-Wates’ public profile as a creator of social justice performance bolstered Bhagat’s endorsement of me as an artist, researcher, and person. My training and movement coaching experiences with The Conciliation Project over many years also provided me with a cultural sensitivity for speaking about and being present for discussions of race and racism. Since the trip was centered on accessing African diaspora sensibilities (and knowledge) through travel, inherent in that undertaking is the examination of the topic of race and racism. By having been a part of several workshops, talk-back sessions, and rehearsals with the Conciliation Project, I was prepared to fully participate in this endeavor. This aspect of my being “vouched for” by my association with Bhagat, Pettiford-Wates, and The Conciliation Project cannot necessarily be

¹⁵⁰ “Dr. Pettiford-Wates is currently on the faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University, she served 17 years as Head of the Drama Department at Seattle Central Community College. Dr. T has enjoyed being a Scholar-in-Residence at numerous colleges and universities around the United States as well as in Sub-Saharan and West Africa. Dr. T work has been recognized by different awards, recently she received the PACME- Presidential Awards for Community Multicultural Enrichment, it honors those who have made significant contributions VCU’s commitment to diversity. She was chosen from three other PACME recipients to receive the Reise-Melton Award which is given for making contributions to cross-cultural relations. She has received the Dan Evans Award for Outstanding Faculty for her pioneering work "uncle tom: de-constructed." This is the groundbreaking work that inspired the creation of The Conciliation Project. She has appeared in the Broadway production of "For Colored Girls..." and in both National and International Touring Companies. Her television, film, industrial, voice over & commercial credits are extensive.”

<https://www.theconciliationproject.org/about1-c1sd>

measured, but its impact cannot be understated. Afro-descendant people cannot just speak freely about matters of race in mixed company or with interlopers present in their group. To be a full participant is to not be an observer. Therefore, because of my knowledge of these matters, through my work with The Conciliation Project, I brought a palpable sensitivity to my interactions. This palpable sensitivity involved understanding that while I might have been surrounded by Afro-descendant people in the group I was traveling with, I was not Afro-descendant myself. Acknowledging my non-Black-ness had to be coupled with knowing when to speak (to comment or give opinion) and when to be silent (as a non- Black person). My experience and relationship with Bhagat and Pettiford-Wates also afforded me the ability to be able to speak my truth without negating the truth of others.

Aside from my professional relationship with Pettiford-Wates, I also have a personal relationship with her. Several years after my graduation from VCU, I married her daughter making me Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates' son-in-law. Within the Black community this also gives me a type of trust to be able to work with and access the US- Black experience from an honest place of respect and close proximity (even though I am not Black myself).

All of these things I present to the reader of my dissertation with the caveat that I am present in understanding that I myself am not Black; I myself am not Afro-descendant. I am a Latino cisgender male born in the United States with the heritage of Latin America, specifically, Colombia. Yet my own minoritarian status —my own non-white [non-Euro-descendant] status in the United States— also gives me a type of credibility with Black Americans for understanding the positionality that they forever find themselves in. To be Black in US-America is to always be a divided individual, to live with a kind of double-consciousness that has you always seeing

yourself through the eyes of others.¹⁵¹ This is not dissimilar to the non-white immigrant experience in US-America today. As a first-generation US-American, with Spanish-speaking parents from Colombia, that feeling of otherness and seeing yourself through the eyes of others is common link between so-called Black and brown people.

All of these things contributed to my being able to go on the trip. Once on the trip, the first two days had a lot to do with the chaperones and me developing a rapport. There were four adult chaperones in addition to myself. Mrs. Angela Patton and Dr. Ram Bhagat were the co-directors of the trip. Christina was a parent to one of the girls, and Sister Faye was a Richmond-based African dance instructor that works with young people. Much of that rapport building had to do with commonalities amongst us, such as my having lived in Richmond, my having attended VCU (a university the chaperones were familiar with), my relationship to Bhagat, The Conciliation Project, and also to Pettiford-Wates, all of which gave me a credibility and access with this group of chaperoning women.

Another aspect of my access had to do with my step-son who is also African American. And so, by divulging on the trip how the things that we were seeing related to me, I was able to not only be academic in my assertions and commentary (in my relationship to what we were encountering), but I was also able to express and speak on a personal reason for me to be there. All of the adults cared deeply for the growth of the young women in the areas of consciousness-raising (from an international trip to a region that has many Afro-descendant people). In addition to the caring about the girls, I was able to bring something else: I would openly question myself (in conversation with the chaperones) of how I could in some ways take some of these experiences and apply them to the raising of my US-African-American step-son. As Madison relates in *Critical*

¹⁵¹ For more on Double Consciousness, see W.E.B Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folks*.

Ethnography there is, “an ethical responsibility to address processes of unfairness or injustice within a particular *lived* domain.”¹⁵² To openly speak about the application of what I was learning and what all the chaperones were invested in doing –helping the young people grow— further integrated me into the adult group. It was evidence of a common goal and shared values. Most importantly though, my comments and reflexivity were coming from an open place of personal familial ties to the US-African-American experience. Sincerity was the key here more than any specific insights or questions shared publicly with the group. To care about Black people in general and be invested in raising a Black son in US-America, is to align myself not only with social justice values of the chaperones, but also to be closer to their own positionality –close, while always acknowledging that I do not live it myself.

The final element of my access had to do with – once I was already there – my disposition. I was able to become part of the group because of the rapport I built by helping. In every instance, I attempted to not be an interloper or outsider but to integrate myself into this group at various levels. First, with Bhagat: to help him whenever possible with some of the director-level aspects of communication –i.e. aspects of someone who is leading the trip’s logistics— such as working with the guides and drivers. Secondly, with the chaperones: making sure that what they cared about and what they were doing –as they focused on the young women’s experience and learning— was something I cared about; making sure that I was ever-present in that process.

For the group as a whole, I was also the only member of the group with a working knowledge of Portuguese other than the guides. And so, at times when the guides were not present, I was able to translate for the group. This was not perfect, of course, but the attempt itself made me a valuable member of the group as opposed to a tag-along.

¹⁵² Madison. *Critical Ethnography*. 5

And then finally, when we were in our circles working with the young women, attempting to contextualize, reflect, and grow with them I was able to bring some of my expertise in teaching and my educator-self to the circle. Also, I took the time to create a short public speaking addendum to some of the latter circles so that the young women could benefit from one of my areas of expertise, which is performance. The young women were expected to return home and do presentations for their schools, for their peers, and for the Girls for a Change organization. There were four girls on the trip between the ages of nine to fourteen (I have omitted their names in this writing given that they are minors). I helped them think about how they were going to organize the content of their information, how they were going to situate that content within the context of their own experiences and a few pointers on how to gain and hold audience attention. This sort of reciprocity and conscious effort to add to the young women's growth contributed to my access and success of ethically integrating myself into the group for this trip.

2.3.2 Description of the trip overall

The following details are of the multiple tourism encounters during the ten-day trip. The young girls and their chaperones participated in the consumption of folkloric performances; workshops of dance, music, history, and movement; travel to the epicenter of Black Brazil; and tours of cultural organizations. The travel agency that organized the travels and cultural experiences was YourWorld Consultant Group, Inc. YourWorld is, "a special interest market research and development consultant company, dedicated to serving those groups and organizations interested in the African diaspora, its culture and events. YourWorld specializes in designing, developing and managing travel packages for US-African-Americans. We have more

than twenty-five years of experience providing quality special interest travel packages in the areas of education, culture, religion and business.”¹⁵³

African Heritage City Tour of Salvador - We were driven through the city in a small tour bus. The driver and tour guide were both Brazilian. The tour guide spoke English and was able to orient us as to the significance of: architecture, neighborhoods, local anecdotes, sculptures, cultural norms, Bahia within a greater Brazilian context, fun things to do in town, Afro-Brazilian religious iconography, gastronomy, and places of meaning for Afro-Brazilians.

Visit to Ilê Aiyê – Ilê Aiyê is a cultural institution with an arm of the organization dedicated to music and carnival performance. We visited their education center in Salvador. The director of programming met us at the door and gave the girls a personal tour of the facility. He explained what the center’s mission was, and how each space was used. He explained the history of Ilê Aiyê and how it has developed into a renowned Afro-centric organization in Brazil.

Visit Ile Axe Opo Afonja Terreiro – We visited the Ilê Axé Opô Afonjá Terreiro. A *terreiro* is a compound dedicated to the *Orixas* of the *Candomblé*. *Candomblé* is an Afro-Brazilian religion. It has been closely linked with West African religions that also revere and venerate *Orixas*. *Orixas* are gods or deities that represent an influence human existence. *Candomblé* practitioners are said to have a specific *Orixa* that watches over them. They are a member of the house of this *Orixa* and attend rituals where (at times) initiated individuals embody the *Orixa* in dance-trance rituals that last all night at times.

We went as a group and our guide was familiar with that particular *terreiro*. She was able to give us some background before we arrived. After we arrived, a member of *terreiro* showed us

¹⁵³ “about us” YourWorld Consultant Group, last modified 2015-2016, <http://www.yourworldgroup.com/about-us.html>

around to the different houses dedicated to the different *Orixas* of *Candomblé*. *Orixas* such as *Oxun*, *Ogun* and others. There are many *Orixas*, each with its distinct characteristics and mythos.

There were opportunities to walk around amongst the special cottages of *Orixa* veneration. Each had color palates, sculptures and iconography relevant to the specific *Orixa* being worshipped. We also were able to meet people that live and/or work in the compound. One specific place that we went was seeing women from the compound that were working on a traditional weaving technique making shawls, scarves and other textiles. We had the opportunity to purchase those textiles in direct support of the *terreiro* if we wished. There were opportunities to sign up for ritual cleansings. These had to be prearranged with a reservation beforehand. But, we were not able to because it had to be on another day when the specific individual who is designated to be able to do ritual cleansings was available.

The entire trip took about one morning – approximately three hours, three and a half hours. We were also able to purchase paraphernalia such as books, such as beads, such as other what we might term to be souvenirs, but they were souvenirs specific to *Candomblé* and specific to having visited. Some of which (for example the beads) were cleansed in water and herbs that are supposed to cleanse the items received by the individual purchasing it. Once there during the tour, we received a background on a *candomblé* for the uninitiated. We learned of the history of the first founder of it and the prominent role that women played in the development of this particular *terreiro*. But, of course, of *Candomblé*, generally.

Visit Steve Biko Institute – The Steve Biko Institute is an educational organization.¹⁵⁴ I remember that we were met at the location – a site of not many luxuries but plainly an educational

¹⁵⁴ “sobre nos,” The Steve Biko Cultural Institute, accessed December 01, 2017, <https://www.stevebiko.org.br/sobre-nos>

space. There were individuals working in the office. There were young people with Steve Biko shirts running around doing all manner of administrative tasks, cleanup tasks, preparation tasks, organization filing tasks. We were shown videos inside of a demonstration space, workshop space, teaching space. The video was very clearly prepared and the production value was high. It explained the history of Steve Biko Institute, of Steve Biko himself. It showed some of the works (in a visual-film format) that Steve Biko Institute does. Steve Biko was a South African who fought against the apartheid regime of racial segregation. Because of shared values and respect for his life's work, the institute chose him as a namesake.

Full-day visit to the historic city of **Cachoeira and the Boa Morte Sisterhood** – We traveled two hours from Salvador to the Cachoeira during the festival of *São João* (St. John the Baptist). We met a member of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) named Dona Dalva da Samba.¹⁵⁵ More information on the sisterhood can be read about in the following chapter which examines the event *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death).

The STEVE BIKO CULTURAL INSTITUTE was founded on July 31, 1992, on the initiative of black teachers and students who - in a pioneering way - created the first pre-vestibular [college entrance exam] course for blacks in Brazil. In many meetings in the gardens of the Faculty of Economics of the Federal University of Bahia, in the center of Salvador and based on antiracist struggles around the world, there was an urgent need to bring together black militancy at the national level around Education. The Institute then emerges seeking the insertion of blacks in academic space as a strategy for their social ascent and the fight against racial discrimination. The education at the institute is born out of the recovery of the ancestral values of its students, based on the Black Consciousness Movement spread by the South African Bantu Stephen Biko. Hence the name of the cultural institute beneficent Steve Biko, chosen in honor of one of the fiercest fighters against the apartheid regime of racial segregation. In its pedagogy, the Institute differentiates itself by the discipline Citizenship and Black Consciousness (CCN), which rules in the classroom, the self-esteem and the struggles of the black people in the fight against racism. In the discipline, students are led to rescue the Afro-Brazilian culture, highlighting the religiosity, the ancestry and trajectory of activist references in the fight against inequalities. With this, Biko seeks to influence the posture and thinking of young blacks. [translated by Diego Villada].

¹⁵⁵ Dona Dalva da Samba (moniker of Dalva Damiana de Freitas) is a well-known figure in Cachoeira and is the matriarch and founder of her own *samba* school. She has received an honorary doctorate (*título de Doutora Honoris Causa*) from Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia for her work with young girls, dance instruction, composition, and singing in the Recôncavo region.

Workshop Day – History Lecture: A traditional academic conference style presentation by a local activism leader of Afro-Brazilian thought and political action, Gilberto Leal. He is an outspoken member of *Coordenação Nacional de Entidades Negras* (National Coordination of Black Entities). **Capoeira Demonstration:** Participatory workshop led by *Mestre* (Master) Valmir of Fica Bahia, a school of *capoeira* located in Salvador, Bahia. **Traditional Indigenous Instruments and Rhythms/Drumming:** Participatory workshop led by Giba Conceição, internationally recognized percussionist and cultural ambassador bringing Afro-Brazilian rhythms to greater Latin America and beyond. **Samba Demonstration, Workshop and Dances of Brazil:** Participatory workshop led by Elivan Nascimento, instructor and choreographer of contemporary dance.

Drumming with Banda Dida - When we went to the drumming day, it took place in the Pelourinho. This drumming day was not the workshop day where we had the four closed workshops. This was an individual closed workshop in the Pelourinho neighborhood. Pelourinho is a part of the historic area of Salvador, Bahia where there is a center plaza and different side streets all of which have all manner of souvenir shops as well as music schools and cultural and artistic artisans.

When we went to the DIDA group, we went to their headquarters where they teach classes. The DIDA group is renowned for their percussive and percussion performances in and during Carnival. This group, like other groups, is invited to perform in Carnival in large numbers and in groups of 15, 20, 30, 50 people. These performers take their drums and carry them in the parade either on a float or on the streets themselves.

When they perform, they perform in unison. Their specialty is Afro-Brazilian rhythms of Brazil. They are known for their performance ability that goes beyond the simple drumming. Videos of them have wonderful outward energy and choreography as they walk with the drums

which are quite heavy in some instances. The workshop was taught by the director of the group in their space which was in a large room with many instruments laid out for us and ready. All of the girls and all of the chaperones were able to participate. I can report that I found my drum to be very, very heavy. I also was able to observe the director and her assistants helping each of us to find a very specific rhythm so that the group was creating a complex rhythm that had many different percussive instruments as a part of it.

Folklore Show and Dinner - The folklore show was a folkloric ballet performed by BALÉ FOLCLÓRICO DA BAHIA.¹⁵⁶ On the first night after we arrived, the guide in Salvador, Bahia took our group to have a traditional dinner. We could order many things, but many of our group ordered a feijoada – a traditional dish comprised mostly of beans and other side dishes. We had our Brazilian meal which was delicious at a restaurant in the Pelourinho. During the dinner, the guide welcomed us to Bahia, told us a little bit about the performance that we were about to see, and told us what dish what was, what ingredients had what, and what was very popular in Brazil as far as gastronomy.

We then went to the show. At the show, we were able to see a folkloric ballet very clearly designed for consumption by tourists. It was a theatricalized dance performance that was inspired by Afro-Brazilian life and religious practices. BALÉ FOLCLÓRICO DA BAHIA is a, “38-member troupe of dancers, musicians, and singers performs a repertory based on a ‘Bahian’ folkloric dances of African origin and includes slave dances, *capoeira* (a form of martial arts),

¹⁵⁶ “BALÉ FOLCLÓRICO DA BAHIA (BFB), the only professional folk dance company in Brazil, was formed in 1988 by Walson Botelho and Ninho Reis and has achieved considerable success in its short history. Under the artistic direction of José Carlos Arandiba, the company’s many national and international tours have earned it a prestigious reputation throughout the country and abroad that is reflected in the response of the public and the critics. The 38-member troupe of dancers, musicians, and singers performs a repertory based on a “Bahian” folkloric dances of African origin and includes slave dances, *capoeira* (a form of martial arts), samba, and those that celebrate Carnival. The company presents the region’s most important cultural manifestations under a contemporary theatrical vision that reflects its popular origins.” <http://www.balefolcloricodabahia.com.br/eng/historico.html>

samba, and those that celebrate Carnival. The company presents the region's most important cultural manifestations under a contemporary theatrical vision that reflects its popular origins."¹⁵⁷

The theatre space was centrally located in Pelourinho, which communicates to theatre-goers (many of who are tourists) the central place of this dance troupe within Salvador's cultural community, figuratively and literally. It was a small theater with an open-air lobby that you then passed through to the performance space. There were no chairs, there were only banks of seats that were successive similar to an amphitheater where the next level is a little bit higher and the next level as a little bit higher, but there are no chairs, you just sat on the ground. Yet because they were steps your feet could be touching the step below as opposed to you sitting on them. The performance featured the dancing of and representation of within a dance performance of *Orixas*. *Orixas* are what can only be deemed to be deities in English, yet that word does not capture or fully capture the full meaning of it. Within the Afro-Brazilian religion of *Candomblé*, the *Orixas* are protectors of an individual. They are prayed to for help and guidance. They are not people. They are elemental forces who are anthropomorphized in depictions of specific characters that to the initiated are very identifiable. To the uninitiated, they are not as identifiable.

Some of the *Orixas* that we saw were Oshun, Ogun, amongst others. The traditional way of depicting them had specific props. At one point, one of them had a skirt of straw, another had a bow and arrow – small in their hand. Again, these are things to be associated with specific *Orixas* and the folkloric ballet had rhythms and dance moves associated with each one. There were several pieces that made up the entire performance. The pieces in many ways were fashioned around figuring out, getting to know each of the *Orixas* and very specific rhythms that corresponded to each individual one. Also, it had moments where the *Orixas* would interact with each other and in

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

doing so, we were able to ascertain aspects of character, aspects of what descriptive character traits are associated with that *Orixá*. They were not explained in words. There was not a lecture of any sort and the performers did come out at the end to receive their applause, but again, most of it had to be explained later by our guide.

The ballet itself, though, was lent a certain authenticity because of the neighborhood we were in- in the city and state we were in – in Brazil. At the same time, the production quality was such we could see that many of the people in the audience were tourists. Even if they were Brazilian, they were not of that particular place. The performance was also not a religious ceremony even though the characters and elements that these characters brought to the show were religious in nature. They were more presentational, they were more to show, they were more to celebrate. These were not religious devotees, these were virtuosic performers that were performing them. And yet in the explanation the guide gave us, she explained that in order to perform these *Orixás* even in a non-religious context, these performers had to tap into something in order for us to see what we saw, i.e. in order to be able to perform them “correctly.”

Pinho writes about the *Blocos Afro* in her book *Mama Africa*.¹⁵⁸ This is the beginning point for my constellation, all *Blocos Afro* are definitely a part of the Black tourism sites. Pinho explains *Blocos Afro* to be musical groups mostly located in the Pelourinho neighborhood of Salvador, Bahia. Not only the music groups’ performance spaces, but also their schools, and headquarters. To the *Blocos Afro* music performance I add the cultural organizations that form part of a network of Afrocentric social impact. This social impact is what draws African American tourists to visit these organizations, take workshops, and seek out their labor; be they performances or social

¹⁵⁸ Pinho, Patricia de Santana. *Mama Africa*. 34-37.

actions to benefit local Afro-descendant people. Two such cultural organizations include Ilê Aiyê and Steve Biko Institute.

2.3.3 More on the term Emancipatory Possible

The Emancipatory Possible is the outcome – hopefully positive after certain givens of inequality are taken into account. That is to say that in the hemispheric and unequal relationship, the critique cannot and must not end at pointing to the colonial matrix of power and its never-ending, ever-changing pervasive ways to keep those of the margins in the margins. Instead, I propose that small gains are the only gains that matter. Because what matters is the effect for those in the margins. Often overlooked and even invisible, marginalized minoritarians by any other name need: (1) to be seen, (2) to be acknowledged for their contributions individually and as a group, (3) culturally valued without diminutizing or diminishing, (4) given the opportunity to tell their own stories in their own ways.

When I write about emancipation, the next natural question is: emancipation from what? That is a good question. My answer: the inescapable grasp of modernity's darker side, coloniality. More specifically, the colonial matrix of power written about by Walter Mignolo and his predecessor Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano. In his book *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*, Mignolo elucidates that, “ ‘modernity’ is a complex narrative whose point of origin was Europe; a narrative that builds Western civilization by celebrating its achievements while hiding at the same time its darker side, ‘coloniality.’ ”¹⁵⁹ Mignolo's arguments that promote finding a decolonial option (to oppose coloniality) with regard to the decolonization of knowledge

¹⁵⁹ Mignolo, Walter. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*. 2-3.

and thought, are built on opposing what Quijano termed to be “el patrón colonial de poder” (the colonial matrix of power). This matrix is a kind of four headed monster held aloft by two legs. The four heads are: control of economy, of authority, sexuality, and knowledge/subjectivity. The two legs that support the four heads are: the racial and patriarchal foundations of knowing. For Mignolo and subsequent scholars focused on decoloniality, this matrix is always in a feedback loop that is inescapable, precisely because it is the foundational structure of Western civilization. Mignolo advocates that any true breaking of the cycle of coloniality, and thus undoing of the colonial matrix of power, will require thought (ways of knowing, thinking and being) that does not come from within the matrix, but rather from without. The solution to breaking this cycle will be a movement from within the colonial wound, for example, an indigenous movement. That is, resistance will originate in an indigenous community with a solution that has yet to reveal itself and will seem antithetical to thinkers and scholars influenced by the matrix (which is practically everyone on the planet).

I do not deny the colonial matrix of power’s existence, or the effects of coloniality, such as Eurocentrism in academia or race as invented classification of human beings with awful consequences that have lasted centuries. In fact, within this dissertation’s chosen scope of studying the travel of African Americans and the tourism of Afro-Brazilian performance, one of lasting effects of the colonial matrix of power can be immediately identified. The marginalization of Afro-descendant people in the America’s is a direct result of European colonization projects that included the exploitation African enslaved people. Still, I do not take such a pessimistic view of this very true phenomena, as I suggest Mignolo does in *The Darker Side of Western Modernity* when he undercuts his own call for decoloniality by essentially deeming it an impossibility (to escape the feedback loop). I equate Mignolo’s own call for the “analytic of coloniality” with my

own term of “emancipatory possible.” Mignolo purports that, “The analytic of coloniality (decolonial thinking) consists in the relentless work of unveiling how the matrix works. And the decolonial option is the relentless project of getting us all out of the mirage of modernity and the trap of coloniality.”¹⁶⁰ While I am not prideful enough to think my emancipatory possible is THE decolonial option, I do present it as attempting to accomplish the task of making small gains. Emancipatory possible, with its focus on performance’s potential for possibility (and potential for working relentlessly to show how the matrix works), is one decolonial option (of which I believe there to be many). In the absence of a silver bullet, such as a truly independently derived solution (to the colonial matrix of power) from indigenous spaces, small gains need to be strived for by those marginalized in a system that places European identity and European thought at the center of “modern” life. These small gains that I am alluding to overlap with what scholars, such as Doris Sommer, have termed to be “wiggle room.” Wiggle room attempts to open up spaces within/between the ever-present effects of living as a marginalized individual in a world where the colonial matrix of power continues to generate, produce, and modify itself through “interconnected hierarchies.”¹⁶¹ Such hierarchies are taken up by Patricia de Santana Pinho; she relates that, “thus, at the same time that roots tourism offers the possibility of challenging traditional North-South flows of cultural exchange, it confirms the existing hierarchy within the black Atlantic.”¹⁶² This inescapable production of confirming the hierarchies that presently exist in the Black Atlantic is akin to the colonial matrix of power’s inescapability. I contend that is where wiggle room is most needed; from places you cannot escape.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. 17.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Pinho. “African American Roots Tourism in Brazil.” 2008.

The emancipatory possible exists within the “wobble room” mentioned by Donna Sommer in *Cultural Agency in the Americas*. Sommer explains that agency is enabled by creative practice. She writes that, “where structures or conditions can seem intractable, creative practices add dangerous supplements that add angles for intervention and locate room to maneuver.” Here Sommer is generally referring to the concentration of wealth, the diminishing of state services, and the erosion of civil liberties (due to fears related to terrorism) that cause life in the twentieth century to feel full of despair. Sommer is advocating for noticing gaps in destabilized systems. For Sommer, “this is wobble room...what Brazilians call *jogo de cintura*, a move from the waste (or hip) not forward or backward, but sideways... The preference admits that opponents have greater weight and force, so that heroism is foolhardy and good sense demands creative options.”¹⁶³ *Jogo de cintura*, or wobble room, therefore, is a metaphoric dance for those in the global south. In that dance, there is freedom for brief moments. It is here where performance in tourism can make interventions and create potential and possibility for change. That potential of possibility is what I deem to be the emancipatory possible.

The emancipatory possible can be a call-to-action but doesn't have to be. Mainly, it is an equitable exchange in a dis-equitable world. It stands in sharp relief to the present global order. It connects marginalized to marginalized in the diaspora (amongst diasporic, trans-postcolonial subjects). The emancipatory possible is optimistic and is created rather than always existing. It is not a naturally occurring phenomenon. It needs to be thoughtfully curated through staging, direction, and intention. The emancipatory possible is created when the lines are blurred between producer and consumer, performer, audience.

¹⁶³ Sommer. *Cultural Agency in the Americas*. 2006.

In participation there is power. There is also the potential to erode, invert, or re-arrange power structures. Such potential is not a foregone conclusion. But, in performance, the potential is all that is needed. Roots tourism performance, where there is emancipatory possibility, is often not a mass appeal performance. It is not a performance for entertainment only. This must be a tourism encounter between a consciousness-seeking public and consciousness-offering artistic producer with virtuosic presentation and authenticity of art, self, and tourism packaging. Nothing about the encounter can or should be fake, even if it is very staged. In fact, everything about it must be staged in order to show the staging, making it paradoxically more authentic. Yet, tourism is aided by the staged authenticity because of the stakes. Tourists have traveled looking for something already, thus they are more prone to find what they seek and traveling to the event adds to the emancipatory possible.

2.3.4 Further Description of the Tourism Encounter — performance

For this portion of the chapter, I am modeling Soyini Madison and Norman K. Denzin's fieldwork and post-fieldwork (write up) models. For Denzin, scholars who work in this mode, "will be committed not just to describing the world, but to changing it. Their texts will be performance based...They will inscribe and perform utopian dreams...ethnography is never theory- or value-free...we now know that the ethnographic, the aesthetic, and the political can never be neatly separated. Ethnography, like art, is always political."¹⁶⁴ For Madison, performative writing is relational, evocative, embodied and consequential.¹⁶⁵ Writing that is relational, and

¹⁶⁴ Denzin. 128-130.

¹⁶⁵ Madison. 194-198.

therefore generous, is when you strike a difficult balance between necessary complexity and the avoidance of unneeded complex explanations. Writers in this mode are offering their words to Others and caring about what this writing does for that Other (the reader). Evocative writing enacts as it describes by weaving images into the text. To write with embodiment is to forefront knowledge of the body; it is to write from the body as you write through the body. Consequential writing is never ashamed of the politics it engages in.

I am also using techniques espoused by clowning researcher Barnaby King, as explained in his book *Clowning as Social Performance in Colombia*. He relates that his style of ethnographic work, which he calls ethnoclownography, “begins and ends with embodied practice, the performance and technical skills of other clowns.”¹⁶⁶ For Barnaby to access the “know-how” (of these other clowns), he draws upon his own clown technique and practice in order to interact and analyze the practice of the others. While I am not studying clowning or techniques of clowns, I am studying these young US-African-American tourists and their chaperones. I therefore use my own technique and practice in the areas of teaching and performance creation (as a performer, director, movement choreographer), to interact and analyze the practice of the tourism encounter participants.

During Girls for a Change trip, I was traveling as an embedded participant. I was accompanying a group of roots tourists on their journey to and from Bahia, Brazil. It is important to note as I describe my experiences that the Other needs to be pointed out so as to be in line with the ethical goals of performative writing of performance ethnography. As Soyini Madison points out in *Critical Ethnography*, “As we recognize the vital importance of illuminating the researcher’s positionality, we also understand that critical ethnography requires a deep and abiding dialogue

¹⁶⁶ King, Barnaby. *Clowning as Social Performance in Colombia*. 10.

with the Other as never before.”¹⁶⁷ In this case, the Others are both the roots tourists and the hosts (producers) of the tourism encounters we were invited to engage in as a group. We travelled within Salvador (and to Cachoeira) over the ten-day period. The group stayed in a small hotel near one of the lighthouses of Salvador’s tourism districts. Each day we visited a different part of the city by van. These included historic neighborhoods (such as Pelorinho—the historic city center), Afro-focused service organizations (dedicated to cultural and education work), a workshop day, a day trip to Cachoeira, the festival of Sao Joao, visiting a religious *terreiro*, and free time.

Within this site of analysis, I have chosen the focus of this case study to be the workshop day. During the workshop day, a conference room was rented out and we received four one-hour experiences: a history lecture by a local academic and activist, a music *samba* lesson, a *capoeira* lesson, and a dancing *samba* lesson. All sessions had translators from Portuguese to English (some formal, some informal). The organizers for this day in particular were: Girls for a Change organization, the travel agent, the tour guide, and the chosen instructors of the workshops. All of who collaborated to make the workshop day successful and beneficial for all involved as a part of the established trip schedule.

2.3.5 Workshop Day

Lecture by scholar/activist – After breakfast, we went over to the hotel. The first workshop of the day was a lecture. There was one gentleman seated up front and we were all sitting in an audience in front of him. It was very similar to the setup of academic conferences. He was sitting at a table. At the table he had some books and papers with him. Obviously, it was prepared

¹⁶⁷ Madison. *Critical Ethnography*. 8-9.

material. He had the authority about him of a scholar, a historian. Our tour guide was in deference to him as a subject matter expert. Also because of the traditional conference lecture setup of the room. And the topic was of the Black experience or the Afro-descendant person's experience and struggles in Brazil in general. But, more specifically, in Bahia and more specifically in Salvador. He gave anecdotes from his own life. He gave anecdotes from mostly the latter part of the 20th century. He spoke about the common person's struggle in relation to the larger growth of the country and of being left behind. The information was in Portuguese and was being translated by our guide.

Workshop of *capoeira* – The next part of the workshop day was the *Capoeira*. The *Capoeira* demonstration took place in the center of the room after the chairs were removed and the tables were removed, and the chairs are put to the outside of the room. There were onlookers such as the guide, such as Willard Taylor of YourWorld Travel who came that day. He had just arrived in Salvador. We had the parents sitting on the outside and a few of us, myself and one or two of the chaperones as well as all of the young women were seated in the circle. The group that came was a *Capoeira* school. They brought a *mestre* (master) with them and several skill levels of people with them. They gave us a short talk about the history of *Capoeira* and what *Capoeira* means to them. They showed us a couple of techniques, but mostly it was the energy of the *mestre* and the *mestre*'s son that stood out to me. The idea was that every single person in the circle was to participate and every person that sat down did participate. It did not matter that mostly those of us were part of the tour group had not done much *Capoeira*. I had done some in the past for my research of Brazil and of Bahia but I by no means well-versed in the physicality of *Capoeira* as far as doing it.

The young women participated. They went individually into the *roda* and did each move that the *mestre*'s son (and the other skilled *capoeiristas*) showed, the girls also played the *jogo* (game) with them inside of the *roda*. And kicks were thrown, evades and feints were made, but you could see in doing it, there was an understanding that was happening different than being told about it. Also, doing *Capoeira* in this place, in this particular geography, had a different meaning – it added an authenticity to it. And then with these particular people who were involved, plus with the vetting of the artists by Willard Taylor and the group's directors Bhagat and Patton.

There were several levels of authenticity that were happening here besides the actual doing that gave the actual doing more meaning (that gave it more authenticity). I made sure that I went in and played a little bit. It was exhilarating to learn from such virtuosos. Not only were they performers of *Capoeira* (because they did demonstration) but also teachers of –and therefore students of —this form of dance that fuses martial arts, movement and in many ways acrobatics in one artistic form. The significance of *capoeira*'s *roda* relates to the type of *capoeira* being practiced in particular and the Afro-descendancy of this movement form in general. A *roda* (circle) is an equalizing shape, which means that everyone in the circle is equal and has a place at the metaphorical table. There are no chairs in this *roda* for the non-musicians, because in *capoeira* the relationship with the ground is of great importance. From the ground there is power; power that is transformed into force energy (from the ground, through the leg, as in kicks) and also the change in relationship to the ground that facilitates an evasion movement. The ground is a steadying force in a multidirectional game of movement and dance that involves headstands, shifting of weight onto the hands, leaning on one leg at times, and occasional weight sharing between partners. The ground is the constant, whereby your own body and the body of your partner/opponent are in constant flux. It is the ground that helps determine the height of your torso and engagement with

the danger of more aggressive movements. It is the ground that helps telegraph to the other what and where you plan to be, even as you attempt to gain position in a game that requires some guile. The only more important element than the *roda* and the ground is the *berimbau* and its sister instruments. The *berimbau* is a string instrument made with a small spherical gourd, curved wooden stick, and metallic string. It is played with a small wooden rod, about the size of a pencil or pen. The sound is distinctive and changeable based on the positioning of a small stone or coin moved under the taught string. The *berimbau* instrument is the soul of *capoeira roda*. The two players dancing and moving together do with the rhythm of the *berimbau*. This instrument is accompanied by percussive drums and shakers. This music of the *berimbau* and percussive instruments is also sung with often in a collective call and response. The *roda*, the call-response singing, the *berimbau*, and the Angolan emphasis of this capoeira that was done at this workshop gave this participatory tourism experience an authenticity that recalled past situations.

If roots tourism is a kind of pilgrimage in order to access some of the identity of the destination (because tourist feels their own identities are connected to it), then roots tourism performance is inextricably linked to the identity of the destination (perceived or actual). To speak or write about *capoeira* is to speak or write about Brazilian national and regional identity. *Capoeira*, similar to *samba* and *candomblé*, are as fundamental to Brazilian identity as carnival. In fact, the internationally known festival and party of carnival is made up of Brazilian symbols such as *capoeira*, *samba*, and *candomblé*. These are specific regional symbols of Bahia.¹⁶⁸

Capoeira is usually written about historically, in terms of the mythos of its earliest developments as it related to the culture of enslaved Africans during and after the era of official

¹⁶⁸ Scott Ickes. *African-Brazilian Cultural and Regional Identity in Bahia, Brazil*. 2013.

Brazilian slavery.¹⁶⁹ It is also written about by practitioners attempting to document the various foundational figures of *capoeira*'s contemporary development.¹⁷⁰ The two most prominent figures of capoeira in its contemporary development, beginning the 20th century, are *Mestres* Bimba and Pastinha.¹⁷¹ Beyond the practitioner model of writing for *capoeira*, there is the Afro Brazilian identity model. Regional identity and Bahia, as related to its being regarded as a Black Mecca, Black Rome or Little Africa in our hemisphere.¹⁷² Often Tourists (roots tourists or tourists not looking for ethnic cultural products) describe the reason they go to Bahia as the search for "culture." Given Bahia's Afro Brazilian designation, meaning the connection between by Bahian-ness and African-ness, when tourists speak of culture there, they're talking about mainly *capoeira*, *samba*, and *Candomblé*. Tourists know *capoeira* because it is a Brazilian export throughout the world. It has been seen in films and other popular media since the latter half of the 20th Century. There *capoeira* schools in many major cities throughout the world.¹⁷³

Capoeira has also been written about to highlight the juxtaposition and paradoxical relationship between Bahia's current promoted identity (as an exotic Black jovial playground) and the nation-state's use of terror against the very Black bodies that produce this exotic space (what Kristen A. Smith terms: Afro-Paradise).¹⁷⁴ Anadelia Romo, in her book *The Living Museum*, notes that today a visitor cannot help but marvel at a land portrayed as a living part of Brazil's past. Bahia is touted as the birthplace of Brazil and cradle of Brazilian traditions.¹⁷⁵ *Capoeira* and the

¹⁶⁹ Gerard Taylor. *Capoeira: Jogo de Angola from Luanda to Cyberspace*. 2007.

¹⁷⁰ The reader should note that capoeira is not a static art form. Depending on the context, capoeira can be a part of a dance recital, a folkloric dance show, a martial arts demonstration, a tourist workshop, and/or a martial-dance class. These distinctions blur in this art, and any discussion of capoeira is to discuss all, one, or some of its possible iterations.

¹⁷¹ Bira Almeida. *Capoeira: A Brazilian Art Form, History, Philosophy, and Practice*. 1986.

¹⁷² Ickles. 2013. 1-9.

¹⁷³ Almeida. 1986. 29.

¹⁷⁴ Christen A. Smith. *Afro-Paradise: Blackness, Violence, and Performance*. 3-5.

¹⁷⁵ Romo. 2010. 6-10.

other art forms deemed of African origin are now promoted as cultural experiences to drive visitors to the region, whereas these practices were once repressed by Brazil's elites in the early 20th century. Patricia Pinho writes about the diaspora search for Bahia.¹⁷⁶ In her estimation, *capoeira* along with *samba* and the *blocos afros*, create and reinforce a connection with Africa.¹⁷⁷ These cultural objects become references for construction of a narrative of ethnic identity, which she says enhance the myth of Mama Africa. The myth of Mama Africa is the idea that Africa exists as a nurturing spirit within each Black person (everywhere).

Workshop of *samba* rhythm – The third part of the workshop day was traditional instruments rhythms and drumming by an artist named Giba.¹⁷⁸ Giba was so well-versed in each instrument and his energy was infectious. He was coming with an open heart, he spoke English which this was different than any of the other presenters. Giba came with a myriad of instruments – all percussive – gourds, different drums, what I would call a type of maraca and instruments that we do not have or have access to or knowledge of here in the in the United States as a lay person.

And so, what he did was he talked to his little bit about it and he had us do specific rhythms as a group ranging from very simple to more advanced depending on who could handle more

¹⁷⁶ Pinho. *Mama Africa*. 9, 47-51.

¹⁷⁷ *Blocos Afro* are African-Bahian cultural groups (ie. Banda Dida, Ilé Ayé, Oludum, and others).

¹⁷⁸ "GIBA CONCEIÇÃO is a Percussionist, Composer, improviser, and educator. Born in Bahia with a talent for music, Giba has developed his rhythmic creativity since adolescence. Considered today among the great drummers, Giba began his professional career in 1986 and soon received the Caymmi Award as a musician in 1987. His work is rooted in the deep mysticism of candomblé- an African tradition of religion in Brazil. His research and technical mastery instrument is the Cuica. Giba traveled extensively in Europe and USA with Margareth Menezes and played and recorded with many of the talented Brazilian artists including Gilberto Gil, Paulinho da Viola, Paulo Moura and Armandinho. During the formative years Giba helped founded Samba groups: Sexta Samba Sound, Samba Fama and played with instrumental bands: Pulsa Group, Auto Reverse, Ilú Batá and Carnival Bands. In 2001 he became part of a major research project called "Odantalan". The project accessed the cultural and spiritual heritage by uniting great musicians from Africa and the Diaspora in Luanda, Angola. Giba also worked as a professor of percussion at the Pracatum School, with Carlinhos Brown in Candeal Pequeno, Brotas (2000-2002) and has developed workshops in Bahia, France, Austria, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, New York, Salvador, among other places, exploring the four aspects of Brazilian percussion: Candomblé, capoeira, Afro blocos and popular percussion." <http://www.gibaconceicao.com.br/>

information and who can handle more complex rhythms. He made sure to build a polyrhythmic ensemble over and over again. So, we would begin making one specific beat and then he would add and layer beat on beat on beat on beat and that went on for several minutes for several different beats. All the while he would be talking about Brazilian instruments, a little bit of their history, who and where these instruments are used, what some of their meaning is behind their design. He spoke about his own trajectories in terms of music and where he performs now.

And then he even gave a little bit of a movement lesson in the social dance of *samba* with the rhythms of *samba* accompanying them. The girls all got to touch different instruments and work with them and make percussive sounds with these instruments.

Workshop of *Samba* dance – The next part of the workshop day was a *samba* demonstration workshop and dances of Brazil. The instructor was very good even though he did not speak English and spoke in Portuguese, he was able to get all of us to recreate the movements that he was doing for the dance style called “*samba*.” He did not speak extensively about the history of it. It was more of a dance workshop – very hands-on. Our bodies were moving the whole time. We did repetition of the moves across the floor and then returning to a beginning position. We did social *samba* dancing with a partner. We did sort of a bigger, larger movement *samba* versus a smaller movement *samba* depending on the mobility and flexibility of the practitioner. Everyone was involved (even the chaperones) and the young ladies seemed to be enjoying themselves.

Samba is a site for simultaneous cultural innovation, resistance, and co-optation, according to Kwasi Konadu, in his description of *samba* for the *Encyclopedia of the African Diaspora*. Konado alludes to lyrics in samba-reggae (a form of *samba* in today’s popular music) and the

exploitation of *escolas de samba* (schools of *samba*) by the tourism industry.¹⁷⁹ *Samba* is a popular song and dance form of Bahia. It was popularized in Rio de Janeiro in the early 20th century, but it is generally accepted that the artists most associated with its proliferation were Rio de Janeiro artists of Bahian origin.

Before popularization, the origin of *samba* music and dance is an art form called “*semba*” of the and Angolan region of west central Africa, where many of the enslaved Africans in Brazil were transported from.¹⁸⁰ The home of *samba de roda* (circular *samba*, or *samba* in a circle) dance, is Salvador, Bahia. *Samba de roda* can be seen in informal house parties, formal dance performances (that travel the world), folkloric ballets in Salvador, workshops, and schools of *samba*. Even the renowned Sisterhood of Good Death includes *samba de roda* during the secular part of their yearly catholic festival that is open to the public.¹⁸¹ *Samba*, along with *capoeira* and *Candomblé*, is considered to be an African dance art form and plays a prominent role in Bahian regional identity.¹⁸²

Samba de roda is generally a social dance where the circle is made up of participants dancing simultaneously, both together and not. Usually a dancer initiates and enters the circle and after a not-pre-determined amount of time “calls” someone to replace them in the center of the circle. The “call” is with the body, not the voice, although in *samba* jubilation is a part of the movement and cannot disassociate body from vocal/sound. Thus the “call” is with the body primary but may include a vocal component as well. *Samba* the music, is written about in relation to its development and proliferation by *blocos Afro* (and international musical collaborators).

¹⁷⁹ “Samba.” The Encyclopedia of the African Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture. 817-820.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. 819.

¹⁸¹ Sheila S. Walker. “The Feast of Good Death: An Afro-Catholic Emancipation Celebration.” Women in Africa and the African Diaspora. 1996. 203-207.

¹⁸² Ickles. African-Brazilian Culture and Regional Identity in Bahia, Brazil. 1-3.

Samba, the dance, is written about in relation to the other cultural artifacts deemed to be Africa that can be found in Bahia.¹⁸³ *Samba*, grew in significance due to popular festivals. Festivals as large as carnivals of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador, and as small as the informal festivities of local public squares in Salvador (such as those for the *Festa do Nosso Senhor do Bomfim* or Festival of Bomfim).¹⁸⁴ Roots tourists in search of Africa in Bahia look to *samba* as an example of African arts being “alive and well” in Brazil.¹⁸⁵

2.3.6 Scenario

By deploying scenario as a performance studies theory through which I am going to analyze part of what took place, I am supporting Diana Taylor’s ideas that both archive and repertoire work in concert to transmit social knowledge. She advocates that the use of scenario places spectators within its frame, implicating us in both politics/ethics. Using scenario, I want to establish the current frame (#3 in the list coming up) and contextualize that frame with all of the other aspects of scenario: 1) physical location, 2) embodiment of social actors, 3) the frame, 4) how it is passed on, 5) situating ourselves, and 6) past situations conjured up. This is what is referred to as “historicizing” in Taylor’s work.¹⁸⁶

For Taylor, conceptualizing the frame (#3) of contemporary performance in conjunction with the other aspects of scenario, particularly past situations (#6), connects current debates to past

¹⁸³ Ana Paula Hofling. “Staging Capoeira, Samba, *Maculele*, and Candomblé.” *Performing Brazil*. 2015. 105-107.

¹⁸⁴ The festival of Bomfim in a Catholic yearly festival that takes place in January. It includes a mass and processional that ends at the Church of Bomfim in Salvador, Bahia. The events associated with this festival last ten days. A notable event specific to this local festival is Bahian women in white (traditional dress of Bahia and of Candomblé) wash the steps of the church in a ritual called “washing of Bomfin.”

¹⁸⁵ *Mama Africa*. 32-33.

¹⁸⁶ *Archive and Repertoire*. 28-33.

ones. In Taylor's work, this historicizing —connection from present to past—always seems to reiterate one specific sixteenth century occurrence: Conquest. My own work does not yield such results, nor am I invested in finding the one original source of present day debates surrounding contemporary performances. Instead, my focus is to find possible connections the frame could be conjuring up. These may be from the distant past or recent past, and there may also be more than one. Here Taylor and I differ in specific tactic and purpose, but not in overarching goal: scenario is a process by which non-written phenomena and lived experience can constitute and transmit social knowledge. Furthermore, in doing so, scenarios always conjure up past situations and analyzing (historicizing) the frame (within the scenario) in relation to the other aspects that surround it, can force us to consider ethical questions.

1) Physical Location: According to Taylor in *The Archive and the Repertoire*, the first part of finding the scenario is to call up the scene or the physical location. She speaks about the fact that scene is intentionality, that the scene is the physical environment. But, it is both the material stage – “The material stage as well as the highly codified environment that gives viewers pertinent information, say, class status or historical period. The furnishings, clothing, sounds, and style contribute to the viewer's understanding of what might conceivably transpire there.”

The physical location of my site of analysis is the workshop day. That is to say the day during the 10-day trip when we took – “we” being: the group, myself, the girls, and the chaperones – took the bus to the hotel and participated in the embodied workshops, the four (embodied-participatory) workshops of that day.

So, where are we in the world at that point specifically? Geographically, we are in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. On that particular day, we were at the hotel where the conference room was rented by YourWorld Travel. The hotel's name was the Golden Tulip-Salvador, a large hotel with

conference meeting rooms in the Rio Vermelho neighborhood.¹⁸⁷ Rio Vermelho has several beaches and is a high traffic tourist area. It is not near the impoverished areas of Salvador and is considered a safe area for foreigners to be.

The presentation room or conference room was large. It had windows all along one side about half the way from the roof to the floor- or from the ceiling to the floor. You can see out into both the sea and also to many, many miles of the city. We were from an elevated location. So, while we are presenting or being presented to and participating in the workshop series, we are literally viewing the place that we are consuming. This lends some of the authenticity that I have been referencing throughout this chapter. The staged authenticity that gives this particular side of analysis – its impact.

We were – our small group – in a room where these individuals came to us and presented the scholarly lecture, the *capoeira* presentation, the percussion presentation, and the dance presentation. Because all of the material presented was Afrocentric presented by Afro-descendant people, in the most Afro-descendant concentrated place of Brazil and thus the entire hemisphere, the physical location had a lot to do with our understanding – when I say “our” I mean myself and the girls – of what took place there.

2) Embodiment of Social Actors: The second element of Diana Taylor’s scenario is the embodiment of social actors. She speaks about the functions that these actors perform in relation to narrative structures causing us to wrestle with the social constructions of bodies in a particular

¹⁸⁷ “Rio Vermelho, the bohemian district of Salvador, is the right place to enjoy a cold beer and try one of the best and most famous “acarajés” (typical food), at Santana Square. With a privileged view of the calm sea, where the fishermen leave every morning and arrive at dusk with their baskets full of fresh fish, with Iemanjá’s blessing, Santana Square is also the location of the Our Lady of Santana Church. The streets of Rio Vermelho are the stage of one of the most traditional popular festivals of Salvador: Iemanjá’s festival, on February 2nd. Early in the morning, the boats sail carrying the presents – perfumes, soaps, flowers...- for the Candomblé’s goddess with wishes for good luck at fishing all year round. The sea procession is followed by the cortege of believers in the streets.” <http://www.bahia.com.br/en/roteiros/rio-vermelho/>

context. The specific attributes that are called into focus for my analysis of embodiment of social actors are the totality of all external qualities: age, sex, status, external appearance, peculiarities of appearance, and so forth as related to us by Taylor.¹⁸⁸ In this instance, the embodiment of social actors was such – there were four young women.

One of the young women was younger than the rest. So, there were three adolescents and one approximately eight years old. The young women were accompanied by chaperones. There was the parent, there was the dance instructor, there was the other director, Patton and there was Bhagat, and there was myself. While we are on the trip, we are not only ourselves but we are performing ourselves as tourists. Given the context of the trip entitled “Essence of a Goddess” coordinated by Bhagat and Patton through YourWorld Travel – an Afrocentric travel organization that puts together trips with the expressed purpose of accessing the Afro-descendant culture of Bahia. And this trip, in particular, for which YourWorld Travel created the itinerary and put together this workshop day. The social actors are ourselves who are part of the trip, but we are tourists of a specific kind. We are tourists participating in ethnic tourism or what Pinho has deemed to be roots tourism – African American roots tourism.

The girls are there specifically to absorb and participate as Essence of a Goddess participants. Thus, it is implied that they are young goddesses. In fact, during another portion of the trip when we were at the Steve Biko Institute, the director who gave us a personal tour addressed them as “young goddesses” who must value themselves. While those specific words were not uttered by those at the workshop day presenting, there was an underlying element of that. The trip was called Essence of a Goddess, both directors would mention it constantly during the circles. We had several circles with the girls. Circles consisted of each member of the traveling

¹⁸⁸ *Archive and the Repertoire*. 29.

group being seated in a circular shape and sharing their thoughts and feelings about questions posed by the leaders, Patton and Bhagat. These circles allowed for many exchanges where topics related to Brazil and African culture were paralleled or compared to daily life in the United States. The circles also corresponded to the *capoeira* and *samba* we were exposed to during the workshop day and also throughout the trip (on the streets and in staged performances). As noted above, the *roda* in *capoeira* and *samba* is an egalitarian shape. In a circle, all people present can see everyone else, especially the leader in the moment when that person is speaking. When asked about the circles, Bhagat said,

Yeah, that was another thing that stood out for me, too – the circle – because it gave us a chance to understand the democracy, the equality and equity of the circle where it didn't matter your age, it didn't matter your experience. Being in that circle meant that your voice was as important as any other voice. When one person spoke, everyone listened intently with respect for what you had to say. And you were accepted for who you were in that circle. So, I feel like doing the circle there gave it more importance because we could have just lounged around in the chairs, but we intentionally created that circle space and used the circle process to engage the girls in reflection of their experience.¹⁸⁹

Additionally, the social actors involved are the chaperones. While we were a cohesive group, there were moments, of course, when we were traveling of getting to know each other, of social friction between the adults in wanting to approach different itinerary matters in a different way. At the same time, even within the chaperones, there was a division of labor in terms of watching the girls. Obviously, the two parents had the keenest eye on their own children, but everyone was looking out for the safety of the girls at all times. That being said, the most vocal was Patton – the other co-director of the trip – who was always thinking about and making comments for the girls to bring

¹⁸⁹ Personal Interview. Dr. Ram Bhagat.

out their sense of curiosity and their ability to speak in the moment and encouraging the girls to participate.¹⁹⁰

Additionally, the room itself had to be rented by YourWorld Travel organization. And so, you have YourWorld Travel who created the situation, you have the girls and the chaperones who are there to participate and consume and be tourists who have paid to be there and then you have YourWorld Travel paying the presenters to be there as well.

3) Frame: Firstly, what is the frame in the performance scenario? The frame is a very important part of Diana Taylor's formulation of this performance studies lens. As I mentioned in my introduction to this dissertation, this is where I am combining Taylor's scenario with performance ethnography. The frame is the third part of the scenario. Diana Taylor writes in *The Archive and the Repertoire*, "Encapsulating both the setup and the action/behaviors are formulaic structures [frames] that predispose certain outcomes and yet allow for reversal parody and change."¹⁹¹ Because of its fixed nature, repeatable and/or transferable nature, the frame is what allows for the emancipatory possible to be possible. The frame can appear to be stereotypical according to Taylor and they are passed on. That is, she writes, "They are passed on and remain remarkably coherent paradigms of seemingly unchangeable attitudes and values. Yet they adapt

¹⁹⁰ The other chaperones, including myself, did not push as hard in that way because our social role in that moment was more of facilitating, and we had just met the girls. The YourWorld Travel representative, Willard Taylor, was there when he was present during the workshop day as well. And he had a vested interest in making sure that we had a good time, that we were learning, that we were taking in the information, that we were comfortable. Himself and the guide were our main points of contact in the city and so he went out of his way to make sure that we had a schedule, that everything on that schedule was pertinent and interesting and also that the logistics worked smoothly of having the bus ready to go as soon as we finished and we were ready to go somewhere else, of giving us options of different places to go, so on and so forth. But still, we had paid to be on the trip in so many ways we were customers of that organization the same way that they were the "boss" of the individuals who they had hired. We could see after the workshops were done that guide or Willard would pay these individuals with an envelope. And so, while we were receiving this information, they had a different relationship to the day in that they came, they taught or showed, or demonstrated, or lead the group and then they were compensated for that time. They were employees – contractual employees.

¹⁹¹ Taylor. *The Archive and the Repertoire*. 2003. 31.

constantly to reigning conditions. Scenarios refer to more specific repertoires of cultural imaginings.”¹⁹² The scenario, I argue, is the critique of scholars, that of north-south hegemonic relationship. The scenario for the “Girls for a Change” trip is that of a more privileged class or group of people traveling to the global south and consuming the cultural products of that particular place with a complete disregard for the people there. Additionally, in this case, because of the Afro-descendant content and also the performers, it is the consumption of the Black body by some of these wealthier individuals who have the ability to travel transnationally and have the ability financially to purchase a ticket to such an event. And yet, because scenario allows for change, it is the fixity that enables fluidity.

The frame is also one where the people who are participating in the event are doing so in a closed workshop setting – that is to say that the artists came to them, the performance came to them – again, a frame of privilege. Privilege here is the frame. Taking is the frame. Yet as Diana Taylor points out, it is the predisposition of certain outcomes that allow for reversal parody and change. My emancipatory possible is that possible “change” she is pointing to within unequal tourism encounters. Because in this instance, the young women that went are not your typical white, rich American that is traveling abroad. They are not adults. They are traveling with adults, but in many ways, they are children and adolescents. They are part of a group which many have considered to be of lesser power in the United States context. They are both Black and also women and also young. And so, here we have something that presses up against or challenges the predisposed frame – something that upends it. It was through great sacrifice that some of these girls were able to go on this trip. It was not easy to put the money together to be able to go.

¹⁹² Ibid.

Additionally, this is why we had such a low number of them. There were only four girls that were able to go on this trip.

The frame of taking (culture) is also upended and/or uprooted by the embodied simulation and the participation that is involved in this case study. Once you begin moving your body in the ways that the presenters are moving their body, performance which is already an act of transfer becomes an even more directly transferable knowledge. That is not to say that because you dance (participate) in one *roda* of *capoeira* or one *roda* of *samba* or you make one percussive sound on a drum, that you are all-of-a-sudden magically transformed into a Brazilian person (or Afro-Brazilian for that matter). No, that is not the case. What is the case is that embodied simulation maximizes that frame's impact in this upending fashion. As is written about by Scott Magelssen in his book *Simming*, by putting yourself in it, you're learning something that you could not possibly learn by watching. There are elements of that participation that take that frame – the frame of the rich American coming and taking from South America – and pull it, twist it, changes it – not much, but slightly. In that slightly is where the emancipatory possible maximizes that frame's impact.

Additionally, the emancipatory possible is concerned with the other. In this case, the others were the non-tourists in the room who were the producers of the event. Those that made the consumable product of experience. This product was the drums that we were able to touch that Giba brought with him. It was the *roda* that was created in that moment and does not exist ever again, but it was real for that moment with those people in that place with that *berimbau* playing and that *mestre* and *mestre's* son showing us what they have honed, in terms of skill and the meaning of their art form live and in front of us. It was the young *samba* instructor who is showing us a choreography of his own design and a way of instruction of his own design. These are, again,

part of a frame of a people of a richer country coming to a poorer country and consuming something that they find value in because of its exotic nature.

And yet, all of the people there were Afro-descendant people who presented their work. All of the people there who produced the event were there to share their culture, were proud of their culture and said as much. And in their explanations, gave praise to, gave legitimacy and authenticity to everything that we were hearing about their particular rhythms or martial arts or history as we were being told it directly from the mouth of someone who had lived some of these civil rights struggles in the 70s and 80s as was presented by the scholar who led the first part of the workshop day.

The frame in this tourism encounter was of United States people coming and taking/consuming culture with their touristic gaze and ignorance of struggle for local Afro-Brazilians. Usually this occurs without context, to make it more digestible and pleasant. In contrast, all of these instances within the encounter on that day had much context. In fact, differing from the folkloric ballet performance where we did not get to meet the individual performers personally, we developed personal relationships with the *mestre*, *mestre's* son, with the scholar who was there to present his civil right struggles, with the *samba* instructor, with Giba. We were able to take pictures with them. We were able to learn what they do when they're not presenting to tourists. They were real and full people, who for us came to represent their own art form in this particular place of Bahia. That is to say they were not consumable products because of the context and differences made to the fame; they were people to be respected and honored for sharing their art form.

4) How it is Passed On: Taylor explains that the acts of transfer in scenario reflect the systems that work in the scenario itself. The various modes that come from either archive or

repertoire be they writing, reenactment, dance, singing. And the multiplicity of those forms tells us about the multiple systems at work.

In this particular instance of the workshop day – my site of analysis – the system is easy to recognize. As a workshop, the performance was created in that moment by virtue of the space not because of the room but because of where that room was, but because of the view, who the people were and why we were there and what they were presenting. The way that it was presented was in an interpersonal communication – a dialogic explanation and participatory opportunities.

When the scholar was at his table at the front of the room, it gave his work a certain authority. But, it also was very familiar to the young ladies who were all students. And, of course, the adults who have been students in the past or are current students as I was. In fact, Bhagat being an educator and Patton being a leader of a non-profit in her community often were called to sit in front of a group and explain complex information about their ideas, their organizations and their projects. Similarly, I myself as a researcher and scholar of theater and performance am called to give talks about my own research.

This passing on for that moment is a verbal passing on. Yet it is also about the words that are coming out of this specific person's mouth – how this gentleman looked. He was an older Afro-descendant gentleman speaking in Portuguese in Bahia and he was telling us of instances, not only of his reading, but mostly of his own quest for social justice and civil rights of Black people in Brazil and in Salvador.

The other more experiential workshops were passed in a similar but not exactly the same way. Given that they were experiential, we did not learn about *capoeira* through only viewing it or them talking about it, but we were able to view it, hear what was happening from the *mestre* and then also to participate in it, to receive and not receive notes about what we were doing during

the *roda*. During the *roda*, the *mestre* and the other students did not give notes – we just danced, we just played. We put our heads on the ground and rolled, we put our shoulders up or down in order to get our legs higher. We kicked, we evaded, we sometimes fell. But, the transmission here was in seeing the other person and reacting to the other person as a participant and as a dancer and as a martial artist – not as an outside viewer. Yet at the same time when we were not in the circle, we got to see our friends and colleagues and the other people on the trip doing the same thing in the middle from which we were an outside observer. Yet we were part of the circle still. The real only outside observers were these few individuals who did not feel physically capable to participate such as the guide, one of the older women who are chaperones, one of the moms. And so, they were viewing us as we were in the circle, yet we were viewing the people who were actually dancing. And then also, we heard the music live in that moment which makes that passing on, which makes that transmission very, very specific.

Similarly, the *samba* dance, the *samba* rhythms with the percussion artist and with the dance artist included a tactile element. A transmission by moving but with them putting their hands on us. In order to get the right rhythm, he would grab our hands at times or he would pat our shoulders at times for the right rhythm. We were listening so there is an auditory element and then he might be talking about what to do in terms of rhythm. And then there is the doing and seeing our own colleagues do as we do. Again, a multitude of transmission styles even within a highly understandable, I would say, traditional teaching of experiential learning.

5) Situating Ourselves: Taylor says that scenario forces us to situate ourselves in a relationship to that scenario whether we are participants, spectators, or witnesses. We have to be in the act of transfer. We are involved. We cannot be taken out because we were there. In terms of

my own participation, I attempted to be as open as possible while being my grad-student-self taking in the fact that I am in simultaneously involved in the workshop day.

So, as I was simultaneously participating in the workshop day but also my grad student self, my grad student self was the researcher, the PhD candidate understanding that I am participating in my own ethnographic field work and therefore changing it in significant ways. I am sure that in my absence, these Black women – Afro-descendant young women from the United States – would act differently and talk differently about the events that took place. Additionally, all of the chaperones were Afro-descendant people, Black people from the United States. And so, even amongst themselves, my own presence changed somewhat, if slightly, the way that they talked and acted.

Additionally, I tried to be the first to volunteer, because the girls were young and they were always reticent to participate. An example would be in the *capoeira* circle, nobody wanted to go first. So, I raised my hand and I went first trying to break the ice. I did this throughout the tourism experiences – one given that I was more familiar with some of the Brazilian and Bahian things we were encountering from my own reading and because I had been to Brazil before. Also, because I was not one of the directors, I was not as heavily involved in logistics and thus I was there to participate – and so, many times I went first.

That being said, also because the girls were young and because I'm a grad student, my ability to maintain focus while receiving information often had the individuals that were presenting to us presenting to me directly. This was an aspect that I could not help given that I was always giving them my full attention. And the girls, at times, their attention drifted. Yet I do also feel there was a significant element of my being the only adult, let's say, that was taking in the information and not just watching the kids or working on logistics or directing this or directing that. As the

adult who was right in there with them participating, often I felt as though the energy of the presenter was coming right to me in certain instances during certain tours.

Specifically, during the first day when we were getting the tour of the city on the bus, the driver and the guide were many times talking to myself and Bhagat who was sitting next to me on the bus. And it was Patton who had to speak up at the end of that day and force the girls to sit up front on the bus and asked us to sit in the back so that they were the focus. Myself and Bhagat became cognizant of this – that we were paying full attention and always up front. And in doing so, we took focus and not the girls as far as members of the group. Once this changed, the dynamic changed completely. The girls sat up front, the parents sat nearest to the girls and then we sat in the back and this dynamic worked much better and was the way with that we sat for the rest of the trip.

In terms of the workshop day, specifically, I felt very comfortable in both the lecture portion and the experiential learning portion. Given my background in movement and thus experiential learning modes and also my experience and expertise in theater arts and performance, I was in a position to participate with full enthusiasm and letting the girls see with what enthusiasm – I was receiving the information and participating and able to mess up without feeling self-conscious. I was doing this as I was performing myself keeping in mind that by doing so I was affecting. Now, I was attempting to affect in a positive way, so the girls would have come out of their shell a little bit. There were moments when all the girls were being shy and then there were moments when there was one young lady who it was difficult to get to participate, difficult to get her to talk and ask questions and she had to be pushed a little bit.

6) Past Situations: *Samba* and *capoeira* are both past situations. Taylor explains in *The Archive and the Repertoire*, that scenarios are not copies, they are more of once-again-ness.¹⁹³ The past situations (once-again situations) are so ingrained in a society that no one remembers how they came about or how they become part of cultural myths or assumptions. *Samba* in this case refers to both the dance and the music. *Capoeira* and *samba* are synonymous with Brazil and thus synonymous with tourism's expression of Brazil to/for foreigners. The sharing of these elements of Brazilian culture are the past situations that this workshop tourism encounter is recalling. The past situations are what travelers call "culture." When tourists say they are going to a place to encounter culture it is to encounter past situations associated with place. These new experiences are considered culture because of the touristic stage authenticity associated with them. They are new experiences for the tourist, of past situations, made more "authentic" because of who, what, where, how and why. Who is presenting the material, what material is being presented, where, how the information is transferred and why matters when considering the meaning associated with the encounter.

2.3.7 Analysis

So where is the emancipatory possible in this performance encounter of roots tourism in Brazil? The emancipatory possible is in five areas: 1) the workshop presentation, 2) participation, 3) circles, 4) context (scenario), and 5) geography.

As an artificially created moment, the workshop day was a curated presentation. Willard Taylor and YourWorld Travel put together all four elements for the workshop. The historical and

¹⁹³ Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 32.

activism lectures contradict what Pinho writes about in her book *Mama Africa*. She writes that many tourism companies are not interested in showing or talking about the disparities and inequality of Black Brazilian people. That these companies are only interested in helping US-African-Americans and other Afro-descendant people to engage at a noncritical level. The inclusion of the activist/academic and his one-hour workshop is contrary to this argument, and lays initial groundwork for the emancipatory possible, the shifting of a mindset, or point of view.

Additionally, the workshop itself and the specifics of what was included in the contents (that have been curated) make it (staged) authentic. Again, what I mean when I say staged authenticity in tourism is a spectrum of tourist perception.¹⁹⁴ The staged authenticity involved has everything to do with who the people are that are presenting it; the trusted tourism resource guides that implicitly vouch for the presenters by bringing them to teach at the workshop, and the specific chosen forms of Afro Brazilian culture that are highlighted. This is also embroiled with how these forms are presented: a participatory format.

The staged authenticity also had to do with where the workshop took place. It took place in a safe and closed environment. What makes the staged authenticity happen (in this closed, safe space) is that it is known and understood that these arts forms, teachers and participating people exist, generally, in a non-safe non-closed environment (outside). Each of the artists and teachers brought a specific credibility because of their work outside of this artificial and staged tourism encounter. Aside from that, each individual that taught a portion of the workshop was

¹⁹⁴ Building on the work of Erving Goffman through Dean MacCannell, staged authenticity is the idea that there is a front and backstage to any tourism encounter. The front stage is the public facing part: the people and elements that aren't engaged directly by the audience of tourist(s). The backstage is the non-public facing (behind-the-scenes) part of the tourist experience. If everything a tourist encounters exists along a spectrum of staged authenticity (and it does), then where the encounter lies on that spectrum has to do with what any specific tourists deems to be more or less "authentic." In tourism all authenticity is staged.

knowledgeable in his or her area, at least to the level that could be discernible by a tourist. If staged authenticity is a spectrum that builds on of the work of MacCannell and Goffman, then the workshop day had a very specific low-key aspect in terms of decoration and setting. While it was private and therefore a safer space, it also had a distinct rehearsal feeling to it. Even the activist's lecture was not for an academic conference. The style in which it was presented and how the chairs were set up along with how he delivered the information was academic in format. But this workshop moment itself was a private, and reminiscent of a non-public rehearsal—a special space different than a fully public space. All of these attributes combined to make the space *special*—uniquely powerful—because it was for the dissemination of Black ideas from Black people to Black people.

No one involved was ignorant of the fact that the situation was artificially created. This was a curated private workshop sponsored by YourWorld travel for this specific group of young women and their chaperones. But because of the express purpose of the trip, to expose these young women to Afro Brazilian culture, the staged authenticity of this moment of the workshop presentation format facilitated acts of transfer. In a mutually reinforcing relationship, the acts of transfer and staged authenticity are where the emancipatory possible existed for this encounter as a whole.

During the *capoeira* portion, the master of the Bahian *capoeira* group spoke of sharing, he spoke of an exchange, and he gave the background of his group, the art form, and the specific instruments involved in some of the movement. The demonstration was given by students of his from the *capoeira* school. Each student presenter was at a varying level of proficiency. In terms of authenticity, this type of demonstration is counter to the types of demonstrations that might be seen in a formal stage performance, where virtuosity is prized. In a demonstration for a large group

outdoors, entertainment would likely be the goal. In this instance of the workshop presentation, the students all showed their time and relationship to this art form through their proficiency or non-proficiency.

Part of the *capoeira* workshop was also the relationship of the movements to the sounds of the *berimbau* and other instruments. Not everyone playing those instruments was a virtuoso player. The master teacher made comments about how each of his students had to learn all of the instruments and were at various levels of development. This was to serve as a model and example that *capoeira* is an art form and a practice. *Capoeira*, that is, is not about being able to do the most bombastic techniques. It is about one's dedication to learning the songs, the rhythms, the instruments, and the movements through individual and group journeys of movement.

The young women were exposed to these ideas by seeing them visually and having them confirmed verbally—it should be noted that the master teacher was speaking through an interpreter. Which adds another layer of staged authenticity given that the *capoeira* master, his son, and advanced students were speaking in the local language (related to the origin of the art form). It should also be noted that while the majority of the *capoeira* presenters were Brazilian, not all of them were. Some of them were from other international locations, including Europe, Asia, and other South American countries. The master teacher and his son were Bahian and had very dark skin.

The staged authenticity continued with the *samba*. For the percussion portion, the master instructor named Giba brought with him a great many instruments. His authenticity had to do with the introduction he was given by the tour guide for our benefit as well as the sounds that he could create. Additionally, his staged authenticity also had to do with his ownership of the instruments and ability to talk briefly about the history of each one. Some of the instruments were not familiar

to us as US Americans. The master teacher would explain the genre of music in Brazil which relied on a specific instrument. He would then show how to use the instrument and encourage one or two of the young ladies or chaperones to take that instrument up and explore sounds with. Again, the staged authenticity is in the low-key nature of this exchange. The acts of transfer involved are that of a private setting for private class where Afro-Brazilian cultural art form and ideas, in this case sounds and rhythms, are being exchanged.

Similarly, the dance *samba* portion involved a rehearsal atmosphere. Using dance pedagogy techniques, the master teacher would explain through doing and require that the students show immediately after, either as a group or individually. At times we would form lines and repetitively move across the space practicing the foot or waist or bodywork necessary to dance *samba*. At times we would have to cross diagonally in order to practice small leaps. This teaching format would be common to any dance class anywhere in the world. Hence, some of these pedagogy patterns, such as the organization of space into rows and or diagonals, gave the *samba* dance workshop an additional familiarity and “way in” for the tourist.

The workshop day format, therefore, laid the groundwork for the emancipatory possible through its staged authenticity within the roots tourism encounter. The privacy of the space combined with: the virtuosity of each of the master teachers, the introduction given for each master teacher by the representatives of YourWorld travel, the low key non-presentational nature of the exchanges taking place, having those exchanges feel like rehearsals, and the master teachers being local in their bodies and work. All of these elements combined created a staged authenticity for this encounter that was not what your average tourist would find or look for. Bahia is known for fun, sun, beach, and culture often packaged/presented as entertainment. Essence of a Goddess, in contrast, presented a deep level of culture, and cultural education. The workshop was not that of a

street performance encountered by happenstance. It was not, as a folkloric ballet performance might be, a distilled representation of religious iconography, movement, and history. Rather, the space during the workshop day was created as an intentionally *shared* space, with tourists and presenters.

In order for the emancipatory possible to *be possible* the staged authenticity of the tourism encounter must also create a space for participation. To speak about participation, I am drawing upon the work of Scott Magelssen in his book *Simming*. Participation in this case, during the workshop, was a type of simulation. On the surface it may seem that the girls were simply imitating the master teachers or workshop leaders. I do not believe this to be the case. The lecture from the activist did not have as much participation as the other experiential programming. But even here we can point out that an exchange took place through question and answer, through that academic activist's choice of what material to present given the age of the young women. The activist gentleman that spoke was very inviting to his listeners to ask questions about the local history of what he called the "Black struggle in Bahia." Here we have an example of these young women participating in a way that they are familiar with: all of them being enrolled in classes of the United States education system (K-12). Yet there is a difference here that this was an informal educational setting within a workshop tourism encounter and it was knowledge being shared between Black people. There were no grades and there were no teachers reviewing or assessing these students. There was only the leader of the discussion presenting the information. He was an expert on the Black struggle in Bahia and in being so, he also stood in for Brazil itself. There is emancipatory possibility in engaging in a way that is familiar, but with new material. The new material in this case was the life's history and work of the academic activist. The participation in this portion, the lecture portion, was low in terms of embodied practice. The young women did have to sit through

the entire one-hour-plus lecture. The young women did listen and have questions for the gentleman at the end. They showed retention of some of the concepts and anecdotes in pedagogy circles later in the trip. I will address circles in a later paragraph.

Of these four portions of the workshop day, the latter three were higher in participation physically—that is to say that the physical involvement included moving your whole body. For the *capoeira*, even while watching there was physical participation. The participants during the *capoeira* portion all sat on the floor. When you are sitting on the floor you can feel the vibrations of the movement in front of you during the demonstration. From the floor when the teacher stands up your eyes must go up as well. Depending on where you are in the circle you may be seated next to some of the percussive instruments, making you feel those even more through sound and vibration. As the demonstration continues there is also embodiment in holding your own weight while sitting on the floor. For those from the US American context who perhaps are not as used to sitting on the floor, having to hold your own weight for long periods of time provides an element of discomfort, and engagement. This discomfort continues as you attempt to discern some of the modalities and norms of *capoeira* within and without of the circle. The *capoeira* circle delimits the edge of the playable space. While you are sitting (or in some cases standing) in the *capoeira* circle you're expected to be ready for one or both of the dancers to get very close and perhaps even hit you by mistake. It is your job, as a person sitting in the circle, to have your hands up or move your body or push slightly on the bodies of those dance-fighting in the middle of circle, because you are there to protect them and yourself simultaneously. Just because you are not the dancer-fighter paired up in the middle of the circle in that moment does not mean that you are not part of what is going on. In fact, by sitting in the circle, you make yourself available to participate in the middle with another *capoeira* dance-fighter. Or, as a musician if you are familiar with the rhythms

and lyrics of the songs, you are available to all of these roles because you are part of the circle. The *capoeira* art form cannot exist in that moment and in that space without a circle. The circle is you and your mates. In this case, during the workshop day, the circle was where the young women and some of the chaperones were fully able to participate.

When asked to jump into the circle with someone else, in order to engage in the dance-fighting practice, it is completely improvised but safe. It is a simulation. It is also an act of transfer through doing. You, as participants, are imitating moves that you have just seen in a demonstration, but you are also coming up with your own sequence of those moves as you simultaneously receive information from the master teacher and the other student across from you in the circle with whom you are “fighting.” It is a simulation of an Afro Brazilian movement and cultural form. As you attempt to do *capoeira* and make these movements, you are cognizant of your own deficiencies. That is to say that you realize how hard it is once you begin to do-it-yourself. So, while you are feeling self-conscious at trying something new, while also experiencing the discomfort of these movements which take your entire body in order to be able to reproduce, you are also cognizant of the fact that these movements have a specific socio-cultural meaning, a meaning your body is participating in. From the small historical introduction by the master teacher, the lecture by the academic activist, and also any prior knowledge that you may have from media, television, film or reading, you as a participant recognize that *capoeira* is a movement discipline that stands in for Bahia, for Black people in Brazil, and for Brazil as a whole. By participating, you become part of that history.

In his book *Simming*, Magelssen, explores how simulation or representational practices can contest or reproduce cultural and societal perceptions as well as identity. Certain forms and movements are connected to specific geographies and people. Whether in actuality, as can be

determined through historical archival research, or in “actuality,” as can be identified through myth, anecdotes, marketing, tourism, and all other facets of globalization. *Capoeira* and *Samba* are this second type of cultural art form. To participate in them is to participate in something more than an aesthetic activity. To simulate by practicing *capoeira* as a novice, to simulate *samba* rhythms, to simulate *samba* movements is to move your body and participate in the culture you have to travel to experience. To participate in this sort of embodied stimulation is to literally attempt to move as others do. This is done so as to know and understand from a different way than merely reading about it or being told about it. The emancipatory possible exists in the transference of information when the young girls (and the group as a whole) is receiving/exchanging information by doing. And from there the possibilities grows, as those same individuals get up and move their bodies in ways that are specific to the art form of the geography they traveled to connect with. All of these people engage with the purpose of growing in self-confidence and self-knowledge about their own Afro- descendancy (either by learning about it [guests] or sharing their own [hosts]). Therefore, at no time are the participants attempting to exchange their modernity (which is modernity/coloniality) for African traditions.

In participating in these Afro Brazilian forms, the travelers or tourists never lose sight of the fact that they are part of modernity’s darker side. The tourists are not attempting to exchange one for the other in terms of their modernity for African traditions. These tourists are hyper aware of coloniality as inextricable from modernity. This knowledge is not expressed in the terms laid out by Mignolo and other decolonial thinkers; it is expressed in the colloquial language of marginalized subjects. Even these young women with ages that are a range from 9 to 14 years old recognize that in the United States they are marginalized people. The young girls and the chaperones from the Girls For A Change organization are dedicated to the advancement of self-

esteem and leadership in young African American women and other women of color. Thus, the participation of the girls and their chaperones in these embodied dances is more to wake something up within themselves than it is to “take” and attempt to “exchange” what Brazil has for what they brought with them. The emancipatory possible, with respect to embodied participation, has everything to do with the possible waking-up, consciousness-raising, and idea-forming (and therefore double consciousness reducing) within the marginalized individual as they experience a tourism encounter in a different geography than their own, a primarily Black geography.

So far in this chapter circles have been mentioned twice (or at least in two forms). There are the circles of the Afro Brazilian art forms, such as the circle of *capoeira* or the circle of *samba* dance. The circle itself is understood by those presenting the material and the tourists in this instance as imbued within African sensibility. Whether it is the circle of the dance-fighting or the circle of the samba dance (*samba de roda*), the circle is an equalizing shape, a shape that helps everyone participating to see each other and to be on the same level. The circle in these forms is said to continue forever, the shape that has no discernible beginning or end. To be a part of this circle during a trip such as this Essence of a Goddess trip, is to be a member of a group. To be a part of the circle is to know, and share. The circle becomes an experiential memory of an act of transfer. The emancipatory possible can be found in this level and type of participation, as well. The shape, and the intention of those that make this shape, coupled with the meaning of those memories of having moved, struggled, sweated in that shape with cultural forms different than your own (that have been given historical and contextual meaning), becomes a way to attain (and open) through wiggle room, some of the inequities of hemispheric tourism and therefore north-to-south knowledge dominance.

The other circle that is referenced in this chapter is a pedagogical tool. On this specific trip, the Girls For A Change leaders, the co-directors of the trip, convened circles in order to process what was being seen and experienced throughout the trip. The circles would take place back at the hotel, or at a restaurant, or as we waited for an event to begin. They did not always happen at the same time and they did not always last the same length of time. The pedagogy circles were organic. After the girls went to bed, the adults would discuss what the next day's circle would focus on. Other topics of discussion in relation to the preparation for the circles had to do with each young woman's demeanor and participation on the previous day. All of the adults were constantly thinking about how to ensure or improve upon the acts of transfer at work. The prep work by the adults for the circles and the circles themselves were chances to constantly remind ourselves of why we were there. More importantly the circles gave a chance for the girls to speak on their experiences through their own lenses. Often the girls did not wish to do so, they did not wish to engage with depth or critical eyes. In these instances, they were coaxed to share, reflect and participate fully, by Patton, the CEO of Girls For A Change.

In the pedagogy circles, we all had different relationships to each other. Having just met the young women, I did not feel comfortable addressing some of the resistance and reluctance to be reflexive. Mrs. Angela Patton, having known these girls from their membership in Girls For A Change programming, made sure to comment and teach (teachable moments) in these moments in the circle where the young women needed some encouragement in order to reflect on the experiences as they were happening. At times, she even took a moment to correct behavior as it related to one or all of the girls not participating fully during a daytime event (not necessarily only during circle time).

This is not to say that the emancipatory possible is only possible through pedagogical circles. Pedagogical circles are just one way that this particular trip engaged the emancipatory possible involved. The emancipatory possible is related to pedagogy circles through ideas of pedagogy of the oppressed (Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal).¹⁹⁵ The insistence on sharing personal experiences and a level of critical reflexivity sharing is a communal act to de-internalize the image of the oppressor. There were elements of rebelliousness and laziness that at times prohibited as much or as critical conversation as was possible. This is to be expected when working with this 9-14 years-old age group. That being said, Mrs. Angela Patton and the other chaperones, knowing these young women better, were able over several circles on different days to continuously demand with gentle pressure, that each girl speak on her views, feelings, experiences and connections.

These pedagogical circles were a transformative element of the trip. As far as the emancipatory possible of these pedagogical circles when considered next to the ideas of Paulo Freyre and his pedagogy of the oppressed, the young women were increasingly posed with questions and problems relating to themselves and the world around them. Feeling that pressure and increased challenge, the young women were obliged to respond from their internal understanding of external experiences, and thus meet that challenge. These pedagogical circles were akin to being called into the *capoeira* dance-fight or *samba* circle. These pedagogical circles were a kind of simulation and participation. They did not involve the tour guides or master teachers of the workshops. But they did involve everything that was seen, heard and done that day. These pedagogical circles were education as a practice of freedom. In seeing how the adults communicated, all of whom were well-versed in discussing matters of race in United States (and

¹⁹⁵ Boal, Augusto. 2002. *Games for actors and non-actors*. New York: Routledge. 28.
Freire, Paulo. 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Bloomsbury.
Boal, Augusto. 1985. *Theatre of the Oppressed*. New York: Theatre Communications Group.

internationally), either through academic training or lived experience, the young girls were able to see and be in a circle with us, adults modeling behavior and conversation of emancipation from the oppression of being marginalized in the United States. The girls were able to take in how each of us responded to the day's activities and how we responded to each other. This was a type of modeling of process and make connections in order to grow in this area of exploring race and ethnicity as US Americans of color.

The pedagogical circles also provided an opportunity for the emancipatory possible to not be skipped. Like all performance, possibility does not equal certainty, related to an outcome for an audience. It would be very easy for African American tourists to not engage critically. In fact, it is that non-engagement that Pinho writes about in her book *Mama Africa*. These pedagogical circles are a counter to that noncritical engagement through problem posing education. Because problem posing education doesn't serve the oppressor, in this case the legacies of and practices of institutional racism in United States that keep young women of color (specifically African American women) from reaching their full potential in business and other spheres, these pedagogy circles are an attempt to maximize the emancipatory possible of the trip's tourism encounters, especially the workshop day.

Context matters. This is no different for the emancipatory possible than it is for anything else. In fact, participation and circling as previously mentioned in this chapter, would not have anything to do with the emancipatory possible if certain contextual elements were not in place. The scenario and situation are where the emancipatory possible is born. The workshop day was a unique experience in a unique place that this group traveled transnationally to get to. The workshop day was one of many roots tourism encounters on a 10-day trip. The art forms that were presented: activism, dance fighting, music, and dance were elevated beyond beauty and aesthetics of art.

Contextually this was a group traveling to Bahia with the expressed purpose of finding Afro Brazilian culture. This was done in order to access an African sensibility in themselves (even if that sensibility is based on myth rather than fact). Mrs. Angela Patton, one year later, said,

Well, we saw [the trip] as an opportunity. We actually do “Girl Action Teams.” That’s one of our many programs. And Girl Action Teams give girls an opportunity to think about issues in their community that they would like to tackle. And then they create a social change project around it. So, these particular issues that girls wanted to tackle, like, about three years ago, had to do with cultural division and also being able to think about how black girls across the globe are seen, how they are not heard and how they are not celebrated. And so, the girls felt like with all of the opportunities that we had for Americans and girls across the globe, why are black girls still left out? Why they still behind? Why don’t people see that they can create contributions to the world? Why don’t people see them as significant and creating change in the world? And why are they devalued? So, the girls thought that they should have this conversation with other girls across the country that look like them and we just happened to have a conversation with Dr. Ram Bhagat about this social change project that our girls had. And he- because of his relationship to, you know, really uplifting Richmond culturally and also being a father of daughters, thought that this was a very needed project. And so, we collaborated our efforts to think about how we could take girls who wanted to see this social change project happen, you know, come to the forefront...of a project that we could do. We like to implement our girls’ projects. And this was an opportunity to do so. Yes [essentially was the Action Team that had the idea].¹⁹⁶

Dr. Ram Baghat, one year later, said,

So, I was the Program Designer of the trip “Essence of a Goddess” and I worked in partnership with Angela Patton, CEO of “Girls for a Change.” And we envisioned the trip as a crucial experience for girls of color. Particularly, African American girls to have an opportunity to explore, experience, and engage in a different culture. And we chose Brazil based on my experiences going to Bahia which is in the northeast section of Brazil and it’s considered the “Africa” or “Little Africa” or “Big Africa,” really of Brazil. It has the highest concentration of African-Descendant people in Brazil. And it provided a rich source of historical framework around the African experience in Americas from a perspective different from what the girls encounter here in the United States. So, it was designed to engage, like I said earlier, the girls and interactions with, like, the Sisters of the Good Death, the Boa Morte, the oldest African sisterhood in the Western Hemisphere. I knew the girls would have a chance to see and witness and just breathe a culture that dynamically represented the African experience which is hard to translate. It has to be experienced...[Naming the trip Essence of a Goddess] I think it’s important because for one, the images that are projected upon women and how that impacts younger girls can be damaging, traumatic, and self- deprecating. So, it’s about building up girls, you know? Stress resilience, self-realization, self-actualization, self-awareness and taking them on an experience that would be unforgettable, that would leave an indelible print on their minds, hearts, spirits. And it’s timely today because, I mean, our culture here in the United States and other places around the world is still so machismo and patriarchal and suppressive of that divine feminine energy. So, Essence of a Goddess also kind of honors my mom and her commitment to education, commitment to travel, and my daughters and women I

¹⁹⁶ Personal Interview. 27 August 2017.

interact with. I find myself in a lot of healing spaces where the majority of the participants are females. So, you know, something I would like to do again 'cause I think it's important.¹⁹⁷

The organization that curated the trip and completed all of the logistics is a travel agency dedicated to bringing Afro-descendant people on cultural tourism that highlights Afro-Brazilian people's history, art, and places.

Not every single day on the trip was as participatory. There were days when traditional tourism experiences took place, such as a bus tour of the city or a trip to the mall or going to the beach or going to the restaurant around the corner. These were necessary as well, in order to form a distinct difference between the workshop day and the leisure days. The way the tour guide spoke of the talent and authenticity of the people we were going to meet added contextually to the experience. Moreover, because these art forms can be seen throughout the city of Salvador in official and established theatrical settings as well as street performance, not to mention signage and tourism marketing, the workshop day therefore became a communal experience that was personal to our group and more powerful because of the context.

Samba and *capoeira* are exports of Brazil. There are dance schools and martial art schools of these two forms throughout the world. You can see either form in a variety of films that seek to increase cultural cachet by including them. Yet the experience of both *samba* and *capoeira* is influenced by where you are as much as who you are with. As Afro-descendant art forms, Bahia is known to be the origin place of both. To practice this dance-fighting and these rhythms of sound and movement in Bahia, is to be at the source. Not in any provable or falsifiable way, but rather in an empathic way. If Bahia is the birthplace of these forms, then to be in this geography changes

¹⁹⁷ Personal Interview. 27 August 2017.

your relationship to these forms as a tourist and your relationship, as a person, to the deep histories of these forms.

Now for a short intermission before we delve into the next case study about *Boa Morte*.

*** *INTERMISSÃO* (INTERMISSION) ***

*The second chapter has now come to a close. Please enjoy this brief intermission in the reading of this dissertation text. I have chosen five images from each case study's field work (ten images in total) to share with you. The images will be accompanied by short descriptions of what is taking place.*¹⁹⁸

2.4 IMAGES: ESSENCE OF A GODDESS – JUNE 2016; SALVADOR



Figure 1. Gilberto Leal (left) and our guide/translator Paula (right) during the history/activism lecture

¹⁹⁸ All images included in this section are from my personal camera. I obtained permission from the Essence of a Goddess trip co-directors Mrs. Angela Patton and Dr. Ram Bhagat to take pictures and use them for this dissertation project. The images from the *Boa Morte* festival were taken in public settings during tourism encounters where camera use was encouraged.

WORKSHOP DAY – History Lecture: A traditional academic conference style presentation by a local activism leader of Afro-Brazilian thought and political action, Gilberto Leal. He is an outspoken member of *Coordenação Nacional de Entidades Negras* (National Coordination of Black Entities). He gave anecdotes from his own life; mostly related to the latter half of the 20th century. He spoke about the common person's struggle in relation to the larger growth of the country and of being left behind.



Figure 2. Mestre Valmir (fourth from left) discusses songs selection with his students before the demo

WORKSHOP DAY – *Capoeira* Demonstration: Participatory workshop led by *Mestre* (Master) Valmir of Fica Bahia, a school of *capoeira* located in Salvador, Bahia. The *capoeira* demonstration took place in the center of the room. There were onlookers such as the tour guide,

and Willard Taylor of YourWorld Travel who came that day, and others. The *capoeira* students of Fica Bahia gave us a short talk about the history of *capoeira* and what *capoeira* means to them. They showed us a couple of techniques, but mostly it was the energy of the *mestre* and the *mestre*'s son that stood out to me. The idea was that every single person in the circle was to participate. It did not matter that the tour group had not done much *capoeira* ever. The young women participated. They went and did each move as shown and the *mestre*'s son and the other skilled *capoeiristas* did *jogo* (game) with them in the *roda* (circle) and played. Kicks were thrown, evades and feigns were made, but you could see that *in doing* it, a level of understanding was occurring, which differs greatly from just *being told* about it.



Figure 3. Giba Conceição (third from left, in circle) teaches Afro-Brazilian rhythms

WORKSHOP DAY – Traditional Indigenous Instruments and Rhythms/Drumming:
Participatory workshop led by Giba Conceição, internationally recognized percussionist and cultural ambassador bringing Afro-Brazilian rhythms to greater Latin America and beyond.

Giba was so well-versed in each instrument and his energy was infectious. He was coming with an open heart, he spoke English which was different than any of the other presenters. Giba came with a myriad of instruments – all percussive – gourds, different drums, what I would call a type of *maraca* (percussive musical instrument with sound made by beads inside of an enclosed wooden orb or sphere). He built a polyrhythmic ensemble of the students in the circle, over and over again. So, we would begin making one specific beat and then he would add and layer beat on beat on beat on beat and that went on for several minutes for several different beats. All the while he would be talking about Brazilian instruments, a little bit of their history, who uses them, where these instruments come from geographically, and what some of the meaning is behind their design. He spoke about his own trajectories in terms of music and where he performs now. And then he even gave a little bit of a movement lesson in the social dance of *samba* with the rhythms of *samba* accompanying them. The girls all got to touch different instruments and work with them and make percussive sounds with these instruments.



Figure 4. Director of Ilê Aiyê's education center **Edmilson Lopes das Neves** (center-left) gave us a tour

Visit to Ilê Aiyê – Ilê Aiyê is a cultural institution most known for music and *carnaval* performance.¹⁹⁹ We visited their education center/headquarters in Salvador. The director of programming met us at the door and gave the girls a personal tour of the facility. He explained what the center's mission was, and how each space was used. He explained the history of Ilê Aiyê and how it has developed into a renowned Afrocentric organization in Brazil. The current headquarters is located in the Liberdade neighborhood in Salvador and was built in 2003. He

¹⁹⁹ African diaspora scholar Niyi Afolabi describes Ilê Aiyê thus: “Afro-Brazilian Carnival group, Ilê Aiyê (House of Life)...Through the lens of Africa, Ilê Aiyê translates its mission to affirm black consciousness, even as a pretext to protest racial discrimination in Brazil. The group was founded in 1974 while Brazil was still under military dictatorship and has since become an iconic reference point for various black movements as they grapple with marginality and struggle for elusive political power. While Ilê Aiyê restricts its membership to only blacks, all racial and cultural backgrounds are encouraged to participate in its events such as the *Carnaval* parades, the *Cortejos da Negritude* (black heritage) parades, and the *Lavagem (da Igreja) do Bonfim* (Washing of the Good End Church) outing, among others.”

Afolabi, Niyi. 2016. *Ilê Aiyê in Brazil and the Reinvention of Africa*. DE: Palgrave Macmillan. xiii.

mentioned to the girls that one of Ilê Aiyê's educational missions is to tell "our history as told by us." He meant telling the Black youth of the Libertade neighborhood about Black History through the lens of affirming Black consciousness.



Figure 5. Our guide Paula Santos (center) talking about Xangô (an *Orixá*), at Ilê Axé Opô Afonjá Terreiro

Visit Ilê Axé Opô Afonjá Terreiro – A *terreiro* is a compound dedicated to the *Orixas* of the *Candomblé*. *Candomblé* is an Afro-Brazilian religion. It has been closely linked with West African religions that also revere and venerate *Orixas*. *Orixas* are gods or deities that represent and influence human existence. *Candomblé* practitioners are said to have a specific *Orixá* that watches over them. They are a member of the house of this *Orixá* and attend rituals where (at times) initiated individuals embody (or rather, become embodied by) the *Orixá* in dance-trance

rituals that last all night at times. We went as a group and our guide was familiar with that particular *terreiro*. She was able to give us some background before we arrived. After we arrived, a member of *terreiro* showed us around to the different houses dedicated to the different *Orixas* of *Candomblé*. *Orixas* such as *Oxun*, *Ogun* and others. There are many *Orixas*, each with its distinct characteristics and mythos. The young women and the chaperones were told to wear white on this day, as it is the most respectful and appropriate attire when visiting the *terreiro*.

2.5 IMAGES: *BOA MORTE* FESTIVAL – AUGUST 2016; CACHOEIRA



Figure 6. *Boa Morte* Headquarters and Museum, mannequin representation of clothing

On the first floor of the *Boa Morte* headquarters, encased in glass, there is a mannequin exhibit of the clothing and accoutrements worn by the sisters of *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). Directly to the left of this image is an entrance into the Church within the headquarters. To the sisters of *Boa Morte* the clothes worn for ceremonial purposes are sacred. It has such a spiritual meaning that sisters choose to be buried in their white *indumentária* (vestment). These white vestments are common in the practice of Candomblé. To the sisters, the use of white symbolizes peace and the struggle for the “people of the Saint.”²⁰⁰ The white *indumentária* (vestment) is recognizable through its detailed embroidery, sometimes adorned with white (or white ivory and metallic –gold, silver, copper) jewelry, such as: rings, bracelets and necklaces. The staff they carry with candles atop are a signal of their devotion as they seek to illuminate the spiritual passage of Mary, Our Lady of Good Death.²⁰¹ The white vestment and staff with candle can be seen in the middle glass case of the image above. In the glass case furthest to the left, the staff being held by the mannequin is the staff of the matriarch. It signals that the holder is one of the oldest and most respected members of the sisterhood. The staff itself is a symbol of her authority within the religious order of *Boa Morte*. It marks the matriarch as a living example of faith and dedication to Our Lady of Good Death.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ “People of the Saint” is my translation of “*povo de santo*.”

Renata Pitomo Cidreira, Ed. 2015. *As Vestes da Boa Morte*. Cruz da Almas, Bahia: Editora UFRB. 99.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 98.

²⁰² Ibid., 100.



Figure 7. Second night (Aug 14), the sisters carry Our Lady of Good Death in the processional

The second night of the festival represents a public wake. There is no partying on the second night and the sisters do not use any jewels that are brightly colored or too distinctive. The unique reversible sash worn by each sister is black on one side and red on the other. On this evening as they mark the death of Mary, the sash is turned outwardly to show black, which matches the skirt worn by the sisters. The red that sometimes the seen, is an allusion to the third day, when celebratory joy will warrant placing the red side to be outward facing. The image above was captured at the end of that evening's processional. Before the statue of Mary can go into the church, it must be carried in the final portion of the street by the sisters only. Any volunteers helping must hand off the weight of the pallet, the statue, and also the wooden poles holding the Golden canopy above. This process is not fast, as it has not been rehearsed. Most of the sisters are fairly short in stature, in some of the volunteers and tourists are taller. This means that the weight of the statue and the position of the canopy are constantly negotiated throughout the procession. At these ending moments of the procession, everyone must wait until the sisters have taken all the weight and continue to move at their slower pace in bringing Mary inside of the church. During the

processional, the sisters move at their own pace and organically walk with the crowd. Here in the transition between processional and the church, the leaders of the sisterhood for this year's festival make their way to the front of the group. They must be the leaders as they enter the sanctuary.



Figure 8. Third day (Aug 15) processional, **Valmir** (center, red shirt) ensures that the sister's path is clear

Valmir Pereira dos Santos is the Secretary of *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death).²⁰³ Publicly he functions as a cross between the stage manager, and event planner, and master ceremonies during the festival. He is a prominent figure in Cachoeira. In *As Vestes da Boa Morte* (*The Raiments of Boa Morte*), Valmir is quoted as saying,

The Sisterhood of Good Death today represents not only for Bahia or Brazil, but for the world, the vital force of resistance and of African-ness. It is a representation of Black people, as a kind of trophy, a form of recompense of all the resistance against and process of enslavement. It is the result of a grand process of resistance, of how black[s] were intelligent to camouflage their way of life, of sheltering and of surviving. And continues to be what it was in the past, a Catholic sisterhood of women that venerate Maria, but that are women of Candomblé.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Renata Pitomo Cidreira, Ed. 2015. *As Vestes da Boa Morte*. Cruz da Almas, Bahia: Editora UFRB.76.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. 86. [translated by Diego Villada]

In the image above, Valmir is coordinating with volunteers, local law-enforcement, and private security at specific points during the processions through the streets of Cachoeira. At certain pre-determined points, the sisters may stop to rest, or turn the statue –as a sign of respect— towards the home of a sister who may be too frail to walk with them, or recently passed away, or held in the highest esteem. Valmir ensures crown control in addition to keeping the walking on schedule. I mention him in my ethnographic field notes in the upcoming chapter.



Figure 9. Third day (Aug 15), the sisters are surrounded by linked-hands circle through Cachoeira’s streets

As the sisters sing and publicly venerate their patron saint, a large circle of volunteers and private security link hands around them. This is to protect the sisters from the press of the crowd. There are so many people I can only describe them as a “throng,” numbering anywhere from the hundreds to thousands. The crowd density changes over the course of the festival depending on traffic getting into Cachoeira, the weather, and other factors of tourism. I was told on the street by a merchant that in 2016 there was a low turnout due to the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. The linked-

hands circle moves along with the group of sisters as seen in the image above. There is no one leader in this circle, you simultaneously receive instruction from fellow linked-hands circle people, Valmir, other prominent individuals, and the sisters themselves. At times, due to walking ability and stamina, some sisters get too far ahead of the main group or too far behind. When this occurs, the linked-hands circle divides and encircles each small group. No uniform direction is given in order for this to happen, participants of the linked-hands circle just “know” – based on observation and feeling.²⁰⁵



Figure 10. Third night (Aug 15), the sister's join the *samba-de-roda* in the streets of Cachoeira

Behind the headquarters of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death), on the third day, as afternoon turns into night the party ensues. Just to the left of the circle featured in the image above, there is an elevated stage with the DJ, percussionists, and live singers and

²⁰⁵ My “feeling” in the linked-hands circle is similar to the concept of “communitas” in performance studies.

dancers. Approximately every 60 to 90 minutes the musical group and dance performers switch out. During the party, small informal circles of *samba-de-roda* are started in different places in the plaza. Periodically, a large circle is formed that organically begins to include everyone in the plaza. After the sisters of had time to rest from their three days of public venerations and processions, they come and join the party for short time. When they do, it is as if rock stars or royalty are our midst. Everyone shouts, members of the crowd rush to meet them; the sisters then work their way to the middle of the circle. After they all dance in unison, absorbing the energy from the crowd and giving energy back, the sisters join the circle and call each other to dance one-by-one. In *samba-de-roda* it is most common for one or two people to take focus in the center. To see these women dance in a secular party is a departure from seeing them in their formal roles during the festival. Here we are seeing them “off the clock” or “off duty,” in informal exchanges between themselves and the crowd. The energy is very exciting, and when you are there you feel as though you are a part of something special; something live, something... performance.

Thank you very much for your interest in this work and also reading this far into the project. The intermission will now come to a close and we shall pick back up at chapter three. The change in tone and formatting here was a primer for the upcoming changes in the next case study's performative writing style.

Desfrute, meu camará (Enjoy, my friend).

3.0 *CAPÍTULO TRÊS (CHAPTER THREE)*

3.1 *CASE STUDY: IRMANDADE DA BOA MORTE*

In this chapter, I argue that the emancipatory possible can be engaged with and is a result of three elements of the *Festa da Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Our Lady of Good Death). First, the staged authenticity of the event is revealed more when you experience the entire town before, during, and after the tourism event. This way the encounter is framed by experiences before and after that shape the meaning of the experiences during the *Boa Morte* Festival- Proper. Second, the event is porous. That is to say, a tourist may enter (or not) as deeply as they wish into the participation aspects of the festival-proper and subsequent secular party. Third, the corporeal-kinesthetic experience is heightened the more involved you are in the center of the happenings of the event, within acceptable limits as an outsider. For me, this bodily experience culminated in being able to carry and be within close proximity to the statues that represent the sister's veneration. These three elements have the potential to help any tourist to become more a part of the story (within reason if respect for local boundaries is maintained). Additionally, for a roots tourist a deeper involvement with the story would yield a higher spectrum of emancipatory possible in the experience.

The previous chapter engaged with some of the constellation of Black tourism sites in Bahia. The first case study was focused on a day of private workshops situated as part of a 10-day series of experiences. In contrast, this chapter looks at one specific event that is a multi-day experience and open to the public: *A Festa da Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Our Lady of Good Death), colloquially referred to as *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death).

I use the colloquial shortened version for referencing the event (and the sisterhood) in this dissertation. Additionally, this specific tourism encounter is of a much higher profile within the constellation of Afro-centric tourism experiences. This chapter seeks to use the lens of performance to analyze the event, but this time I am writing from the point of view of an independent researcher at a public festival as opposed to an embedded member of an established travel group.

The event is notable because at the center of the festival is a group of older Black women that are all beyond forty-five years of age. These mature Afro-Brazilian women are members of a Catholic lay organization called *Irmandade da Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Our Lady of Good Death). These women are said to be direct descendants (if not by blood then by legacy) of the first enslaved Africans of Brazil that were emancipated; they are women that bought their own freedom and that of their family members through hard work and sacrifice. *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) performs this ritual/festival, *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death), in honor of Mary, because Mary is who they prayed to in order to liberate them from enslavement. The origin story contends that when emancipation (the end of official state-sponsored slavery), occurred in Brazil, the sisters thanked their patron saint –The Lady of Good Death/The Lady of Glory—and promised to honor her in perpetuity, during what has become *Festa da Boa Morte*. Mary is the mother of Jesus Christ and is considered the patron saint of *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). Mary becomes Our Lady of Good Death upon dying. After her ascension to heaven she is transformed into the Lady of Glory. These are Christian, specifically Catholic, beliefs enacted and explained during the *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death). Religion and politics scholar Stephen Selka writes that:

Cachoeira is perhaps best known for the festival of the Sisterhood of Boa Morte, a lay Catholic devotional organization (irmandade) made up of Afro-Brazilian women, all of whom are

initiates of Candomble. One of the purposes of the sisterhood, which was founded in Salvador in the 1800s, was to buy the freedom of Afro-Brazilians slaves. Today, Boa Morte is a symbol of racial struggle for people of African descent in Bahia and beyond. The sisterhood's yearly festival attracts Brazilians from around the country as well as many foreigners, particularly African-Americans from the United States.²⁰⁶

Cachoeira is a colonial town of Bahia, famous for its role in the Bahian war of Independence, and as a center of *Candomblé* and other Afro-Brazilian traditions.²⁰⁷ Brian Brazeal's encyclopedic entry "Irmandade da Nossa Senhora Boa Morte," in the *Encyclopedia of the African Diaspora*, supports Selka's summary. Brazeal explains that the Afro Brazilian women that compose the sisterhood are usually beyond childbearing years and are thought to be keepers of secret traditions and *Candomblé*.²⁰⁸ The 1950 official Roman Catholic doctrine articulated by Pope Pius the XII asserts that the Virgin Mary did not die but her son Jesus Christ assumed her on to heaven. Other gospels, celebrated in pre-counterreformation Europe asserted but upon death Mary's body was untouched by mortal corruption and Her soul ascended to heaven. It is the image of dead uncorrupted Mary, through miracle, that is venerated by the sisters.²⁰⁹ Lay Catholic brotherhoods and sisterhoods served as institutional structures where ethnic and religious identities could be maintained. Freed Africans and Afro-Bahians use these institutional structures as societies of liberation. Members pooled resources in order to purchase relatives and sometimes strangers held in chattel slavery. Another function of the Sisterhood of Good Death (and other Afro-Brazilian

²⁰⁶ Selka, Stephen. 2003. "Religion and Politics of Identity in Bahia, Brazil." Dissertation. 26.

²⁰⁷ Brian Brazeal. 2008. "Irmandade de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte." *Encyclopedia of the African Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture*. Vol 1. 239.

"In 1825, the Bahian war for independence from Portugal began. Troops from Cachoeira, including many Afro-Bahians were instrumental in this struggle, and Cachoeira became the capital of free Brazil for a week when Salvador was overrun by Portuguese forces...in addition to its *terreiros*, Cachoeira had other institutions that maintained African religious practice in Brazil...[such as] the Irmandade da Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte."

²⁰⁸ Brian Brazeal. 2008. "Irmandade de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte." *Encyclopedia of the African Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture*. Vol 3.576-578.

²⁰⁹ Ibid. 576.

brotherhoods and sisters) was to pool resources in order to ensure decent funerals for their members.²¹⁰

The origins of *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) before 1820 are not well documented, yet it is known that in that year *Irmandade da Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Our Lady of Good Death) operated out of a church in Salvador called Barroquinha. Brazeal explains that at the time members were, “free Africans of the Jeje ethnicity (Gbe-speakers from present-day Benin and Togo) and devotees of the Jeje nation of Candomblé.”²¹¹ It was in the first half of the 19th-century that the sisterhood relocated to Cachoeira and became affiliated with *terreiros* of *Candomblé* of the Bahian interior. Due to the sisterhoods’ relationship to *Candomblé*, the relationship of this Catholic lay sisterhood to the Roman Catholic Church in Cachoeira has been strenuous at times.

The *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) has dedicated headquarters and (Roman Catholic supported) chapel and church, along with a museum. This was possible due to the international popularity of the festival, support of the Bahian government (tourism boards), and support from US-African-American religious organizations.²¹²

Brazeal reports that current membership in *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) is composed of women of African descent who have been initiated in *Candomblé* for over ten years. Additionally, sisters should be past their childbearing years and be dedicated in their lives to *Orixas* related birth and death: Yansanm Omolu, Oboluaiye, Nana, Yemanja, and Oxun.²¹³ The membership structure for the sisterhood includes novitiates that solicit funding from the public

²¹⁰ Ibid. 576.

²¹¹ Ibid. 576-577.

²¹² Ibid. 577.

²¹³ Ibid. 578.

for the festival, and regular members. There is also a board of leadership for each year which includes a scribe, a treasurer, a general-procurator, and a solicitor. The festival is the sisters' most important public devotion. These public devotions are accompanied by secret rituals of great rigor in *Candomblé*. These rituals are closed to outsiders and as such have not been described ethnographically.²¹⁴ The yearly festival, *Festa da Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Our Lady of Good Death), draws thousands of tourists from around the world, and United States African-Americans regard the event as an intact survival of African traditions in our hemisphere. Due to the fame and popularity of the sisterhood's festival, *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) has attracted considerable investment from the Brazilian federal government agencies and initiatives. This has contributed greatly to the city of Cachoeira's revitalization as a tourist destination.²¹⁵

Patricia de Santana Pinho writes about how African-Americans regard the event as an intact survival of African traditions in our hemisphere. She the first scholar to apply the term "roots tourism" to Afro-centric ethnic tourism in Brazil.²¹⁶ She wrote about African American roots tourists (from the United States) and the discourses that celebrate the *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death) as cultural survival in her chapter "Bahia is a Closer Africa" for the anthology *African Heritage and Memories of Slavery in Brazil and the South Atlantic World*.

Pinho points out that,

Like the African American tourism discourse that celebrates cultural survival, Bahia's official tourism discourse also prefers to focus on how the enslaved and their descendants manage to preserve their original African culture, despite slavery. ...[An] issue of the magazine *Viver Bahia* illustrates this well, for it portrays a colorful picture of the Sisters of the Good Death followed by the caption 'Sisterhood of the Good Death celebrates life.' ... despite briefly mentioning the origin of the sisterhood within the history of slavery, the article emphasizes the organization's victory over slavery. It explained that the first sisters were

²¹⁴ Ibid. 578.

²¹⁵ Ibid. 578.

²¹⁶ Patricia de Santa Pinho. 2008 "African American Roots Tourism" *Latin American Perspectives*. Issue 60, Vol 35, No 3. 70-73

originally obliged to convert to Catholicism but that this generated a rich syncretic practice that allowed for the preservation of Africanisms. Likewise, several African American tourists whom I interviewed expressed how pleased they were to encounter African heritage in the midst of other joyful people who seem to be constantly engaged in celebrating life.²¹⁷

Pinho, a social scientist, explores African heritage tourism in Bahia. Since the latter part of the 1970s United States African American intellectuals and artists have been attracted by the state celebration of African culture in Bahia. In the decade that followed, informal trips by individuals led to the creation of an entire industry with Bahia as the primary destination. Pinho argues that, “Bahia promotes the connections with Africa as part of its public image, the state government and tourism industry disassociate Bahia from its history of slavery.”²¹⁸ Pinho explores the meaning of Bahia among her African American ethnographic subjects in order to understand their choice to travel in order to connect with Afro Brazilian culture as part of the African Diaspora. Three elements are highlighted in Pinho’s work on the Festa da Boa Morte: 1) the growing emphasis on Africanness in Bahia; 2) the search for forms of African purity overlooking cultural mixture; and 3) the visibility of the slave past of Brazil. The editor of *African Heritage and Memories of Slavery in Brazil and the South Atlantic World*, Ana Lucia Araujo, asserts that, Pinho “demonstrates the existence of a close connection between the particular gaze of African American roots tourism and the long-lasting ideology of racial harmony fostered by Bahia’s tourism industry.”²¹⁹

Pinho reiterates a similar argument in *Mama Africa* where she explains that the joy tourists feel is promoted by travel agencies that have no interest in informing the public (visitors from inside Brazil and abroad) about the social and racial disparities of Bahia.²²⁰ There are other kinds

²¹⁷ Patricia de Santa Pinho. 2015. “Bahia is a Closer Africa.” *African Heritage and Memories of Slavery in Brazil and the South Atlantic World*. 274.

²¹⁸ Ana Lucia Araujo. 2015. “Introduction: Wounded Pasts.” *African Heritage and Memories of Slavery in Brazil and the South Atlantic World*. 11.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Pinho. *Mama Africa*. 54-55.

of agencies in the tourism industry that specialize in exploiting poverty. These types of travel agencies specialize favela tours. Favelas are slum and shantytowns with high crime rates and high population sizes. It is where the most destitute citizens of Brazil call home. These slums have been the settings of international blockbuster films such as Fernando Meirelles and Katia Lund's 2001 film *Cidade de Deus* (City of God), written about in *Brazil Imagined* by Darlene J. Sadlier.²²¹ Although favela tourism exists –and seeks to exploit Bahia's poverty-stricken and marginalized—the vast majority of travel agencies that focus on taking people to (or bringing them to) Bahia persistently promote the state as synonymous with joyfulness.²²² In doing so these agencies construct a public image where the culture of Black people plays a central role. An example is how the historic city center of Salvador, Pelourinho, is promoted as a most popular tourist attraction filled with souvenir trinket shops and happy people. The irony is that Pelourinho is named for the wooden stand that enslaved Africans would be tied to as they were punished publicly in the center of town. Pinho explains this irony further by pointing out that Bahians and visitors literally and metaphorically join each other in dance and song where enslaved Africans were brutally whipped over one century ago.²²³

Travelers search for their roots among the many sites of what Pinho calls the map of Africanness. One such site is the city of Cachoeira and participation in the festival of the Sisterhood of the Good Death. Pinho's historical and sociological research suggests that the festival acquires different meanings for the groups that travel to participate. She argues that these different meanings are the result of distinct worldviews, but the discourses that surround the event indicate a desire

²²¹ Darlene J. Sadlier. *Brazil Imagined: 1500 to the Present*. 269-273.

²²² Pinho. *Mama Africa*. 55.

²²³ Ibid.

for a homogenous Black-ness.²²⁴ She cites a lament by some US African American tourists that the elderly Black sisters worship a white saint. Presumably this is because the statues venerated during the event have a fair/pale complexion and not brown skin. This lament is the result of tourists not knowing that these statues have been worshiped by the sisterhood since the 1800s. Also, that the worship of the sisterhood is situated contextually in a religious syncretism – simultaneously a strategy for survival, and a struggle to not lose the beliefs of enslaved African ancestors.²²⁵ *Candomblé* in Brazil is a religion that promotes itself as non-exclusionary, accepting converts from all groups. The Gods and Goddesses (also called Deities by some guidebooks) are comprised of energy and do not choose a specific skin color for those that they choose to possess through embodied trance. Thus, Pinho argues, for *Candomblé* to be a symbol of pure African Heritage (as some tourists wish it to be) would only be possible through a complete disregard of *Candomblé*'s history.²²⁶ The alliances forged with the Christian community as well as choices made by *Candomblé* practitioners (as a matter of survival for the practice) that included political negotiations and adaptations, all point to the religious practice of *Candomblé* as not purely African or Black. Pinho uses the example of the Sisterhood of Good Death to further argue that Black-ness –and the Africanness that is supposedly at its core— continues to be understood in a very limited manner. This limited view denies that the 'original African,' as a template for diasporic Black-ness, can have diverse and multiple ancestries.²²⁷

The religious syncretism of *Boa Morte* alluded to by Pinho is the focus of the work of Sheila S. Walker in a chapter entitled “The Feast of Good Death: An Afro-Catholic Celebration in

²²⁴ Ibid. 56.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid. 56-57.

Brail, as well as the article “The Sisterhood of Boa Morte in Brazil: Harmonious mixture, Black Resistance, and the Politics of Religious Practice” by Stephen Selka.²²⁸ Walker and Selka pair well together in the topic of religious syncretism. Walker argues that the religious war for the survival of African religious heritage in Brazil has been waged and won in Bahia. This religious war she refers to is the contentious interaction between *Candomblé* and the Sisterhood of Good Death with Euro-Brazilian efforts to eradicate them. For Walker, *Candomblé* is an example of Afro-Brazilian insistence on preserving their religious integrity outside of the institutions of European Brazilian society. Insistence on this specific kind of preservation is evidenced during the time of enslavement (and after) by Afro-Brazilians holding religious ceremonies in isolated areas away from Euro-Brazilian eyes. *Candomblé* practitioners manage to worship prohibited African spiritual beings in full view of their oppressors by equating *Orixas* with Saints. Walker expresses that *Candomblé* took the Saints out of the church and used them to hide, through public visual representation (of said Saints), the *Orixas* they were venerating in adapted African rituals. The Sisterhood of Good Death, on the other hand, hid their religious forms of expression and concepts of African origin within an institution that sought to eliminate them. For Walker, the sisterhood represents an infiltration of the *Orixas* into the Catholic church. The Afro Catholic sisterhoods and brotherhoods used the church as a cloak of protection so as to be able to meaningfully express what was essential to their spiritual lives. Stephen Selka argues that the religious syncretism of the Sisterhood of Good Death is neither harmonious mixture nor Black resistance. Selka argues that elite politicians invoke the sisterhood and the festival as harmonious cultural and racial mixture as part of the Brazilian

²²⁸ Sheila S. Walker. 1996. “The Feast of Good Death: An Afro-Catholic Emancipation Celebration in Brazil.” *Women in Africa and the African Diaspora*. 203-214.

Stephen Selka. 2008. “The Sisterhood of Boa Morte in Brazil: Harmonious mixture, Black Resistance, and the Politics of Religious Practice.” *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*. Vol 13. No 1. 79-114.

ideal. Selka also points out that antiracist activists proclaim the festival to be an emblem of Black resistance, with the sisters being heroes of that resistance. His research concludes that whether the sisterhood is harmonious mixture of Black resistance or not depends not only on who is viewing the event, but also who the viewer is talking to. The sisterhood itself chooses how to portray itself through the description of the sisters and of how they engage in their religious practices. The sisterhood expertly negotiates between harmonious mixture and Black resistance in the delicate dance of negotiating social and political spheres. The syncretism of the sisterhood of the death is therefore one of oppositional Afro Brazilian identities. Selka cautions that oppositional identities are not inherently liberating. They are at times problematic for reasons such as the essentialist representations of Afro Brazilian culture doing injustice to the complexity and diversity of every day cultural practice.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

In studying the performance aspects of *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death), I will again utilize critical auto ethnography to locate the emancipatory possible present in the tourism encounter. The next section details my methodological approach.

In this chapter, I focus on *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death). I am not a roots tourist, given that I am neither an Afro-descendant tourist (a tourist that identifies with Afro-Brazilian people and cultural forms), nor am I Brazilian and seeking to connect with my home country. I am a performance ethnographer attempting to supplant voyeurism in observation by applying a “riskier hermeneutics of experience, relocation, copresence, humility and vulnerability”

as explained by Dwight Conquergood and espoused by Barnaby King.²²⁹ The Brazilian roots tourism performance of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) and their festival is colloquially lauded as the “most African” cultural event in the “most African” region of Brazil. My engagement as a tourist and researcher with this distinct tourism encounter (within the map of African-ness), serves to highlight aspects of this public festival using critical auto ethnography of performance (as referenced in my introduction) in an effort to identify the emancipatory possible. My ethnography work in this chapter is informed by the work of Barnaby King, Dwight Conquergood, Clifford Geertz, Paul Gilroy and Soyini Madison.

Barnaby King explains in his book *Clowning as Social Performance in Colombia* that proponents of practice-as-research attempt to balance conventional forms of academic knowledge, “know-that,” with embodied tacit forms of knowledge, “know-how.”²³⁰ Conventional forms of academic knowledge would be reading writing (“know-that”). Embodied forms of knowledge are oft-unacknowledged learning that is acquired through doing. King draws on the work of Robin Nelson and his proposal of a multi-faceted model of “doing-thinking:” thinking by doing, which embraces an interplay of three kinds of complementary knowledge (“know-how,” “know-that,” and “know-what”).²³¹ Know-what is the tacit made explicit through critical reflection. For the work of King, the integration of these three levels of knowledge he calls Ethnoclownography (for he is a clown, researching and working with clowns). It is precisely in the origins of King’s ethnoclownography methodology where I look to for inspiration for the methodology in this chapter in my efforts to point out the emancipatory possible.

²²⁹ Dwight Conquergood. 2013. *Cultural Struggles: Performance, Ethnography, Praxis*. 37.

Barnaby King. 2017. *Clowning as Social Performance in Colombia*. 10.

²³⁰ King. 9-10.

²³¹ Robin Nelson. 2013. *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principals, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*. 36-37.

Barnaby King draws heavily on Dwight Conquergood's notions of "cooperative witnessing."²³² According to King, cooperative witnessing supplants voyeuristic observation with experience, relocation, humility, vulnerability, and copresence.²³³ The work of King begins with body practice and ends with the same. My own work in Brazilian roots tourism performance scholarship mirrors this approach. Elements of Conquergood's work that most apply to this methodology, from his book *Cultural Struggles: Performance, Ethnography, Praxis*, are what he calls a "riskier hermeneutics" that are based on, "listening to and being touched by."²³⁴

In advocating for riskier hermeneutics, Conquergood is invoking and extrapolating from the work of Frederick Douglass in my *Bondage and my Freedom*. Conquergood writes, "No wonder then, that Douglass, a former enslaved person, still acknowledged the deeply felt insights and revelatory power that come through the embodied experience of listening to...all the sensuous specificities of performance that overflow verbal content."²³⁵ Conquergood explains that Douglass recommended experiential and participatory as superior to "armchair reading" (in terms of how to write about people's experiences). Conquergood, using Douglass, promotes an ethnography of the ears and heart instead of reading textual accounts (of slavery, in Douglass' case); this is what is meant by a recommendation for "riskier hermeneutics." Conquergood also positions his deployment of Douglass against the seminal work of Clifford Geertz.

In some ways the work of Clifford Geertz acknowledges that ethnography is an embodied practice and in other it does not. Geertz in *Interpretation of Cultures*, argues for anthropological "thick description," by stating:

²³² Conquergood. 2013. 37.

²³³ King. 2017. 9-10.

²³⁴ Conquergood. 2013. 37.

²³⁵ Ibid.

It is with the kind of material produced by long-term, mainly (though not exclusively) qualitative, highly participative, and almost obsessively fine-comb field study in confined contexts that the mega-concepts with which contemporary social science is afflicted —legitimacy, modernization, integration, conflict, charisma, structure, ... meaning— can be given the sort of sensible actuality that makes it possible to think not only realistically and concretely *about* them, but, what is more important, creatively and imaginatively *with* them.²³⁶

The “them” in this quote refers to the Other, those encountered by the ethnographer in field work. Geertz argues for “highly participative” field work in order to think realistically and concretely about/with the Other. This advocacy of thick description is both a call to produce ethnographic work based on a long-term field study and also to think creatively and imaginatively about/with the Other. Conquergood praises Geertz, acknowledging that Geertz affirms the corporeal nature (and necessity) of engaged and embodied fieldwork.²³⁷ In “Rethinking Ethnography: Towards a Critical Cultural Politics,” Conquergood tempers this praise by stating,

Although ethnographic field work privileges the body, published ethnographies typically have repressed bodily experience in favor of abstracted theory and analysis. In the shift from ethnographic method (field work) to ethnographic rhetoric (published monograph)...the interpersonal contingencies and experiential give-and-take of fieldwork process congeal on the page into authoritative statement, table and graph...Recognition of the bodily nature of field-work privileges the process of communication that constitute the ‘doing’ of ethnography: speaking, listening, and acting together.²³⁸

The give-and-take of fieldwork processes should not congeal on the page. In the transition from fieldwork to writing there has to be more produced than abstracted knowledge. Fieldwork itself is all about the body; there has to be an active recognition of this through privileging of the “ ‘doing’ of ethnography: speaking, listening, and acting together.” Geertz himself pointed to these limitations, when he writes,

In finished anthropological writings... this fact — that what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people’s constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to — is obscured because most of what we need to comprehend a particular event, ritual, custom, idea, or whatever is insinuated as background information before the thing itself is directly examined...There is nothing particularly wrong with this, and it is in any case inevitable. But it does lead to a view of anthropological

²³⁶ Clifford Geertz’s *Interpretation of Cultures* as quoted in: Dwight Conquergood. 2006. “Rethinking Ethnography: Towards a Critical Cultural Politics” *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*. 351-365.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

research as rather more of an observational and rather less of an interpretive activity than it really is. Right down at the factual base, the hard rock, insofar as there is any, of the whole enterprise, we are already explicating: and worse, explicating explications. Winks upon winks upon winks.²³⁹

Even as he is advocating for his thick description, Geertz is cognizant of the limitations that are inherent in anthropological writings. I extend his limitations of anthropological writing to those that overlap with performance. Performance ethnography is also obscured by the details needed to comprehend the particular event. It leads to the kind of flattened ethnographic gaze to be avoided at all costs by artists, researchers, writers, and ethnographers that wish to privilege the body in order to privilege the Other. Still, thick description must be acknowledged and contended with, because it forms the base and foundation of the inevitable in any ethnographic work. That is, Geertz is not wrong that the background information often obscures what is being directly examined. But without a good thick description there is not enough contextual information to call our data collection (“constructions of other people’s constructions”) complete. Geertz’s thick description, even if flawed, still serves as strong a guide and has directed much of the contextual descriptions I provide in this dissertation. Geertz explains,

The point for now is only that ethnography is thick description. What the ethnographer is in fact faced with—except when (as, of course, he must do) he is pursuing the more automatized routines of data collection—is a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render. And this is true at the most down-to-earth, jungle field work levels of his activity: interviewing informants, observing rituals, eliciting kin terms, tracing property lines, censusing households ... writing his journal. Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of “construct a reading of”) a manuscript—foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior.²⁴⁰

As valuable as thick description is for a base methodology, I wish to temper it with the ethics that performance ethnography subscribes to. Doing ethnography is not akin to trying to read a

²³⁹ Clifford Geertz. 1973. *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

manuscript (or write one). As an embodied practice, ethnography is about immersion and knowing through the senses.²⁴¹ Conquergood hits the nail on the head when he challenges assertions that all the world is a text (or manuscript). He asserts, “only a middle-class academic could blithely assume that all the world is a text.”²⁴² Simply because texts are central to the occupational security and everyday life of middle-class academics, especially in United States, does not make text primary. To see the world as text is to limit what can be seen. This is a major blind spot for any ethnographer, as per Conquergood. For a performance ethnographer, a thick description that promotes solely textual readings of the arts (including artists and audiences) encountered runs a great risk of not only flattening inherent complexity but also the committing the disservice of not including the Other. There is ethnocentrism in a culture-as-text metaphor because it causes the ethnographer to stand above and behind, uninvited but still attempting to read the “text” of the Other (like an overseer or spy).²⁴³ For marginalized groups, due to power dynamics, the texts and textual can be, “inaccessible, or threatening, charged with the regulatory powers of the state,” which is why I agree with Conquergood that, “the hegemony of textualism needs to be exposed and undermined.”²⁴⁴

One way of undermining textuality in ethnographic fieldwork and subsequent knowledge production in this form of write-ups is to employ Paul Gilroy’s “politics of transfiguration.”²⁴⁵ In *The Black Atlantic*, Gilroy recounts that for those forcibly excluded, such as marginalized people,

²⁴¹ Dwight Conquergood. 2006. “Rethinking Ethnography: Towards a Critical Cultural Politics” *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*. 351-365.

“Another way of saying it is that performance centered research takes as both its subject matter and method the experiencing of the body situated in, time, place, and history. The performance paradigm insists on face-to-face encounters instead of abstractions and reductions. It situates ethnographers within the delicately negotiated and fragile..dramaturgy of everyday life”

²⁴² Dwight Conquergood. 2013. *Cultural Struggles: Performance, Ethnography, Praxis*. 35.

²⁴³ Ibid. 39.

²⁴⁴ Ibid. 37.

²⁴⁵ Paul Gilroy. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. 36-38.

repertoires of performance practices become political counterculture. Gilroy explains that such, “politics exists on a lower frequency where it is played, danced, and acted, as well as sung and sung about, because words...will never be enough to communicate its unsayable claims to truth.”²⁴⁶ Gilroy is alluding to utopian desires of the descendants of enslaved Africans in his analysis of music being able to aid in “developing black struggles.”²⁴⁷ In his drawing out of the inner philosophical dynamics of counterculture (in musical expression and consumption) he also touches upon utopian aspirations. I see great overlap between the “descendants of slaves” he writes about and the Afro-descendant people I write about in this project that examines Brazilian roots tourism performance. Gilroy goes on to explain how utopias are conceived of as complex because they strive continuously to move beyond the textual. He explains further that,

This emphasizes the emergence of qualitatively new desires, social relations, and modes of association within the racial community of interpretation and resistance *and* between that group and its erstwhile oppressors. It points specifically to the formation of a community of needs and solidarity which is magically made audible...and palpable in the social relations of its cultural utility and reproduction. Created under the very nose of the overseers, the utopian desires which fuel the complimentary politics of transfiguration must be invoked by other, more deliberately opaque means.²⁴⁸

For Gilroy, the “other, more deliberately opaque means” are vernacular Black musical expression. I’m extending that “opaque means” to include Black tourism in general, and Brazilian roots tourism in particular. To move beyond the grasp of the merely linguistic and discursive, as per Gilroy, is how utopias are conceived. Gilroy’s “politics of transfiguration” thereby is related to roots tourism in the latter’s ability to create and promote the emergence of new social relations and modes of association. In the tourism encounter of *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death), new social relations are being created through participatory performances taking place by

²⁴⁶ Ibid. 37.

²⁴⁷ Ibid. 36.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 38.

tourists. The Afro-descendant people that travel to participate in *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death) are part of a “community of needs and solidarity.” The networks created and the emancipatory possible happen under the very nose of the overseers, not literal overseers as during times of enslavement, but the overseeing yoke of modernity and the coloniality that always comes with it.²⁴⁹ Gilroy’s “politics of transfiguration” exist on a lower frequency of playing, dancing, acting, and singing; a lower frequency where words alone are not enough to communicate “unsayable claims to truth.”²⁵⁰

Tempering thick description through the ethics of performance ethnography, by deemphasizing the textual, is my attempt to find a more creative, complex and slippery terrain between the zealot and the cynic. Soyini Madison explains in “Performance, Personal Narrative, and the Politics of Possibilities: Visions and Revisions” that when speaking for Others is discussed (in the academy and in artistic communities) there are usually two opposing viewpoints: the cynics and the zealots.²⁵¹ Cynics view any attempt to temporarily and tenuously “put on the flesh” of the Other as an act of distortion and appropriation. Zealots (foolishly) believe that they are able to speak for the Other better than the Other can speak for herself. Zealots (supposedly) “know” what it is to be the Other and give themselves the authority to speak for the Other, without reflecting on the consequences, because they believe themselves to have *all* the answers. Cynics engage in uncomplicated suspicion, while zealots engage in uncomplicated enthusiasm. Madison’s philosophical intervention, which she calls “performance of possibilities,” is one way to avoid

²⁴⁹ This is similar to the understanding that, “in order to effect change, people of color must either remove themselves or be removed, must always spill real or metaphorical blood, and must sacrifice or be sacrificed...[and that] those without access to the privileges of modernity can succeed...if they play the game by History’s rules.” Lisa Jackson-Schebetta. 2017. *Traveler There is No road: Theatre, the Spanish Civil War, and the Decolonial Imagination in the Americas*. 194.

²⁵⁰ Ibid. 37.

²⁵¹ Soyini Madison. 1999. “Performance, Personal Narrative, and the Politics of Possibilities.” *The Future of Performance Studies: Visions and Revisions*. 276-280.

artistic and ethnographic cynicism or zealotry. In an effort to avoid misrepresentation of the Other by seeking out more complicated spaces between the binary of cynicism and zealotry, “performance of possibility” establishes (as a given) that performance matters and does something in the world. What it does exactly for us as researchers and for the Other should be driven by thoughtful interpretation and critique, assumptions and purpose. Madison’s “performance of possibilities” arises out of her work with performances of personal narratives --specifically out of the identities and cultural practices of underrepresented people. I’m extrapolating her artistic questioning (through ethical and moral considerations) and applying them to tourism. Therefore, the methodology of seeking the emancipatory possible in the *Festa da Boa Morte* (The Festival of Good Death), is related to “performance of possibilities,” because I aim to present and represent Others as makers of meaning through the exploration of the event with embodied focus and thick description that is tempered by the de-centralization of any textual reading (of the tourism encounter).

3.3 FESTA DA BOA MORTE – OVERVIEW & MENTION OF ACCESS

In this section I give you a short overview of the festival through the eyes of scholar of religion and politics Stephen Selka. I quote him at length here in order to provide a succinct overview of the festival:

On the first day of the festival, dressed in white, the sisters carry an image of Our Lady of Boa Morte through the winding streets of Cachoeira to the chapel of Boa Morte for a special mass. According to the sisters, this procession commemorates Mary’s death and at the same time memorializes the members of Boa Morte who have passed away. Afterwards, the sisters offer a public dinner (santa ceia, or holy supper) of wine, bread, and seafood. On the second day of the festival, an evening mass is held in the sisterhood’s chapel, followed by a procession that represents the burial of Our Lady of Boa Morte and of those sisters who have died. During the procession, the sisters wear a black velvet shawl lined with red satin over a white blouse. On the third and the main day of the festival, the red part of the shawl, symbolizing life and happiness, is allowed to show. A morning mass is followed by a procession to commemorate Mary’s

assumption into heaven (represented by the image of Our Lady of Glory). A luncheon follows the procession, after which the “profane” part of the celebration begins. This lasts until the fifth day and includes plenty of traditional Bahian food, cachaça (sugarcane rum) and samba. On the sixth day the festival officially ends as the sisters place offerings of flowers and food in the river according to Candomblé traditions.²⁵²

Each day of the festival has a special meaning in the rituals of the Catholic lay sisterhood *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). The first night is dedicated to mourning and celebrating the lives of the women that have come before, sisters of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) that have passed away. The second night is to commemorate the death of *Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (Our Lady of the Good Death), Mary, the Mother of Christ. The third day is a celebration of the miraculous ascension of Mary to heaven (untouched by death or decay of the body). In this act she transforms from *Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (Our Lady of Good Death) to *Nossa Senhora da Glória* (Our Lady of Glory). The two days that follow are commemorated with feasts and public music and dancing.

This is what I knew of Cachoeira and the *Festa de Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death) before I arrived for my field work. The festival-proper of *Festa de Boa Morte* takes place between 13 and 17 of August in Cachoeira, Bahia. Cachoeira is an important town in the rural *Recôncavo* region.²⁵³ It is considered to be the birthplace of the nation as the place where Brazil’s war of independence began.

This may seem superfluous and repetitive, yet this will give you a touchstone from which to travel to Cachoeira *with* me in the sections below. Some of my experiences pair well with Selka’s descriptions, but most of what I see, feel, explain and examine differs. In order for you to

²⁵² Selka, Stephen. 2008. “The Sisterhood of Boa Morte in Brazil: Harmonious Mixture, Black Resistance, and the Politics of Religious Practice.” *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 79–114.

²⁵³ *Recôncavo* is the Afro-descendant region between Salvador and Cachoeira, along the Paraguaso river. *Recôncavo* translates to “bay area.”

feel that difference, I am setting the scene with Selka's observations. Selka wrote about the role Cachoeira played in his work and the networking it allowed him to do:

It was the festival of Boa Morte, which I attended in August of 2001, that provided the bridge between my work in Cachoeira and Salvador. Besides large groups of foreigners and members of the Brazilian press, several religious, cultural and political groups concerned with Afro-Brazilian issues came from Salvador to celebrate the festival in Cachoeira. Witnessing the festival of Boa Morte helped me to see the tangible connections that were not apparent to me before between rural Afro-Catholic culture, Afro-Brazilian organizations in the city, and party politics in Bahia. When I moved to Salvador after the festival I was able to follow up on the relationships between different religious, cultural and political groups in order to better understand Boa Morte in the wider context of Afro-Brazilian identity politics in Bahia.²⁵⁴

The "tangible connections" between Cachoeira and Salvador were apparent to me as well. In my fieldwork, the festival served as a kind of common experience that called all sorts of individuals to come to Cachoeira and participate. Each was seeking something particular and found that the event drew others in droves for reasons both similar and different. In Selka's case, the connections made served him well in his studies of the intersections of rural and urban Afro-Brazilian religion and politics. In my case the connections made during the festival served me to find out more about the festival's participants and learn more about the festival itself, in terms of meanings and norms. The connections also allowed me to participate more fully, by allowing myself to be seen as someone who valued being there and respected what was going on. Those connections made during the festival began to form a kind of social network of people that would vouch for me with their friends (locally and colloquially), by introducing me and suggesting possible places or experiences to partake in.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ Selka, Stephen. 2008. "The Sisterhood of Boa Morte in Brazil: Harmonious Mixture, Black Resistance, and the Politics of Religious Practice." 79-114.

²⁵⁵ When I use the term "colloquially" in my writing I mean: non-scholarly, street-level engagement in the real-world/real-life without the added baggage of theory-speak necessary in academic settings. Theoretical understandings and underpinnings of societal critique still enacts influence, but the level of engagement with that is minimal in colloquial interaction. In my experience, the best field work results come about when I switch registers (i.e., engage at a lower frequency sometimes) or code switch depending on the situation.

3.3.1 Access

Being in the field, in Bahia, as a North-American, university affiliated, male-presenting, pale-skinned foreigner meant that I stood out in Cachoeira. At times this was useful and at other times it was not. It was less of a hindrance as the festival got under way (due to increased presence of people from all over the world), but it was something I had to contend with as I attempted to make connections with local people. I feel it is important to make this part of the experience transparent so as to remain in line with the ethical considerations that ethnographic fieldwork and this performative (i.e., influenced by Madison's critical ethnography) style of writing demand.

You should note that my use of the word "access" is akin to opening a door. Just because I gained access to a group of people or to an individual Other in the field, does not automatically mean that I was able to have that person trust me enough to explain their thoughts, feelings, and point of view. No, quite the opposite. The access is what opened the door for me to even be able to ask the questions that would lead to finding out about their experiences and opinions. And, perhaps I had to have that person meet me on several occasions in order to have them see that I was in Cachoeira to study the festival in a respectful manner. The first trip to Brazil that summer was an integral part of the access I gained during the second trip. Even though the first trip did not yield contacts in Cachoeira, the experience of the first trip allowed me to have contacts in Salvador, who I could call and ask questions of. Moreover, having the experiences with blocos Afro and other Afrocentric organizations, gave me something to talk about when prompted by Others in the field. It was invaluable, given that such anecdotes gave me a cultural caché I would not have had otherwise. The ability to keep conversation going and be able to add your own anecdotes could be the difference between a short interaction or a longer one that yields new contacts, and potential new information about the town (or event).

Access in this case study works differently than it did in the previous chapter. In the previous chapter, related to the Essence of a Goddess trip, I was the singular pale skinned researcher tagging along on the Brazilian trip of a US-based nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives young women of color. The access needed in order to be able to be allowed to travel with the group before the trip, and then integrated into the group during the trip, was entirely predicated upon relationships that were already established. Long-standing relationships were the foundation upon which I built the trust that would become access during that trip. In this case study, experiencing *Boa Morte*, I was traveling by myself. I did not know anyone in Cachoeira. Yes, I had visited for a day during the Essence of a Goddess trip; one of the tours of the *Recôncavo* region took the group to Cachoeira and we walked around during the *Festa de São João* (Festival of St. John). But, it was a lot different traveling with a tour guide that knew local people and could introduce you to them (versus having introduce yourself).

Additionally, the access needed in the first case study was necessarily different and the access needed for this chapter's case study. With the Girls for a Change group I needed to know more about the experiences of the people I was traveling with through close observation, friendship, becoming part of the group, helping cohesion, and full investment (of energy and spirit) on my part to the group experience. The *Boa Morte* case study required a different approach. All the networks I built were built from scratch. The full investment of energy and spirit is what allowed me to make these connections and have the people that I encountered open up about their experiences, and even extend their own networks to me towards the cause of helping my scholarship. Serendipity also played a large role in my encounters with Others in the field.

To close my transparency section about access, please note that as a Latinx US-person that makes theatre, I deployed both aspects of my identity in order to gain access to individuals. As a

Colombian-American I could use my ability to speak Spanish to engage with other tourists and locals familiar with either Colombia or able to communicate in Spanish. From the theatre side, any artist-scholars that asked what I did for a living and what I teach, were instantly more open to me after they found that my area was theatre and performance. An anecdote of this would be: the owner of the apartment where I lived for the month was from Argentina, he didn't speak English, but he did speak Spanish. Because of this connection, he offered to show me around the small town, as we were enjoying a coffee, the Argentine owner of the apartment introduced me to the owner of a local shop named Rose Angela. She recognized me later during the festival and introduced me to some of the sisters and even one of the local people affiliated with *Boa Morte*, Valmir. It was he that would often call me over so that I might get a chance to help carry the statue of Mary during the procession or the canopy that covered the statue. It was Valmir who would nod his head at me, in a "thank you" acknowledgement when I would join the circle of people protecting the sisters from the crowd as they walked. Access, through the engagement with these Others, is what allowed me to gather the insights I present in this dissertation. It cannot be underestimated from an ethnographic fieldwork perspective and cannot be faked or forced. Part of my success had everything to do with how I approached this work, and some was just the luck you find in the field when one person introduces you to a new concept or new Others.

3.4 CRITICAL AUTO ETHNOGRAPHY OF PERFORMANCE (WHILE FOCUSING ON THE OTHER)

3.4.1 Specific formatting for this section

In the following section I will present my field work for this case study. My writing is a combination of fieldwork observations, notations of my thoughts and feelings, and the corresponding relationship between my experiences and the scholarship and theory discussed in the methodology section for this chapter. Observations and feelings will be reduced in font size, *italicized*, and right-side justified; thoughts/interpretations and theory (analysis) will not be italicized and continue the usual formatting of left-side justification. In the text that is italicized, if a Portuguese language word appears it will be *italicized and underlined*, so as to facilitate distinguishing it from the rest of the English italicized text. Rare instances of emphasis will be in **bold** text. My dissertation text will return to the “regular” formatting conventions in the next chapter.

The order of how I present my fieldwork is specific as well, I have chosen to present it in the order I experienced it. Some details may seem superfluous, but I have decided to keep as much detail as possible to give as much of a true account, through context, of what I experienced and how I encountered Others. The experience is recorded thus: Cachoeira, headquarters and museum, meeting a sister, meeting other people, the Festival-Propor (processionals, mass, meal in white, day two and three), getting close to the statue, helping, the Church, perpetuity, next year’s council, and the party. I use the term the “festival-proper” to mean the first three days of the festival, where the sisters and their venerations are the main part of tourism encounter. The two days that follow are still part of the festival, but the sisters are not at the center of the secular party for its entirety.

My goal here is to bring you, the reader, with me as I encountered this heritage event--not under the guise of knowing exactly what a roots tourist or host feels or knows, but rather with the intention to unearth the areas of the event that are associated with the emancipatory possible.

You will also notice that toward the latter portions of this case study's ethnographic writing, I begin to shorten *Festa de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (Festival Our Lady of Good Death) to *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), and then further shortening it to *Boa Morte* (Good Death). This is common in Cachoeira; as tourists become more familiar with the local scene and the event, they begin to replicate how it is spoken about by Brazilians of the *Recôncavo* region. In colloquial speech the term *Boa Morte* (Good Death) begins to take on an elastic quality, and the conversant individual, initiated in the particulars of local customs, starts to emulate the ambiguous use of *Boa Morte* to mean one or a combination of: the festival event, the sisterhood as a whole, a specific person associated with the organization, the ethos of the event, the time of year (on a festival calendar) and/or the headquarters. For the purposes of this project, I have made sure you will be able to discern what is being alluding to through contextual clues in the sentence. It is also important to note that I often write "you" in the upcoming section. When "you" appears please interpret that as me talking directly to "you," the reader. Imagine that I (as the author) am reading/performing the following section, and the direct address of "you" is part of my vernacular.

As a reminder, I am arguing that the emancipatory possible can be **engaged with** and **is a result of** three elements: 1) the staged authenticity of the event is revealed more when you experience the entire town before, during, and after the tourism event; 2) the event is porous --a tourist may enter (or choose not to enter) as deeply as they wish into the participation aspects of the festival-proper and subsequent secular party; 3) the corporeal-kinesthetic experience become

more heightened the more involved you are in the center of the happenings of the event, within acceptable limits (of respect) as an outsider.

3.4.2 Cachoeira

Anadelia Romo explains that Bahia occupies a critical position in Brazil's imagination and history.²⁵⁶ She says it is alternately denigrated and romanticized, serving as an embarrassing symbol of Brazil's backwardness as well as the cradle of Brazilian national identity, depending on the era. Bahia's role in Brazilian identity is often that of a living museum, a kind of static cultural preserve. Romo argues, even though Bahia represents "African roots" (for tourists and for Brazilians) it is not static. It is thought of as static, because it is generally accepted that Afro-Bahians (the descendants of enslaved Africans) represent a vast majority of the population of that northeastern state. These Afro-Bahians of present-day continue to be thought of as defending and maintaining cultural autonomy by guarding their traditions from the modernity of Brazil's Southern regions. Bahia therefore is not "inherently African" nor is it "essentially African." Bahia is Afro-Brazilian with an ever-evolving and always shifting sense of how that African-ness manifests itself. When I referenced the "living museum" in the title of this dissertation, I did so with the tacit agreement and understanding that this living museum is not a static one.

During August of 2016, I lived for one month in Cachoeira.

Cachoeira is right next to São Félix. It's located on the Paraguaçu River. I was able to explore both towns and I would describe them as small, sleepy towns in the interior of Bahia. Both are very well known within the Recôncavo region, which is colloquially known as Brazil's most African descendant region – with the most African descendant culture and people.

²⁵⁶ Romo. *Brazil's Living Museum*. 1-3.

Recôncavo translates to “bay” and is indicative of the bay region of Bahia (next to Salvador, the capital), and also the rivers that extend from that bay into the interior, where Cachoeira is located. The *Recôncavo* region is recognized by international heritage organizations, such as UNESCO, for intangible heritage preservation. The most well-known intangible heritage place and art form are: the historic city center (Pelourinho) of Salvador and *samba-de-roda* (samba-in-circle). In earlier chapters, I have referred to *samba-de-roda* in a simplified form, by just calling it *samba*. Given that Salvador, and the entire state of Bahia by proxy, is colloquially considered to be a kind of living museum, it is the acknowledgement of specific art forms and externally validating institution (such as UNESCO) that add to the staged authenticity of this geography. Because Afro-descendant performance forms are considered to be folklore and heritage, the rural aspect and relationship of any event to Cachoeira make that event more authentic to those that are looking for that specific aspect of the tourism they consume or participate in.

Bahia started off the 20th Century with an economy that never recovered from colonial sugar’s decline.²⁵⁷ This caused political marginalization of the state. A vision of Bahia, espoused by foreigners and Bahians, that the state is a “cultural preserve,” triumphed in the latter part of the 20th century. Romo explains that,

Bahia has succeeded in creating an identity central to the Brazilian nation and has established itself as a premier destination for national and international visitors in search of the ‘authentic’ Brazil. But government officials have been remarkably adept at using their support of Afro-Bahian cultural traditions (and perhaps manipulation of underlying fears of change) to sidestep demands for improvements in the quality of life for the state’s black majority...The conception of the state has shifted from ‘backward’ to ‘authentic’...Paying attention to the ‘reinvention’ of Bahia during the twentieth century, however, allows us to also consider the constructed nature of the state’s striking racial inequalities. The image of Bahia and its social realities, far from being natural or inevitable outcomes, remain subject to reform and change.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Romo. *Brazil’s Living Museum*. 158-159.

Romo recognizes that *Baianidade* (Bahian-ness) is constructed and not as fixed as the tourism industry would have you believe. In her book, *Brazil's Living Museum*, she chronicles the history of how Bahian identity became central to Brazilian identity. The authenticity she mentions in reference to Bahia and the national and international visitors searching for it, is the staged authenticity of tourism I mentioned in chapter one. It is an authenticity that sits on the spectrum of what tourists consider to be the real Brazil. As I have mentioned previously, for tourists that consider themselves discerning individuals with regard to ethnic tourism, the more is centered on commercial tourism an encounter presents itself as, the less authentic. Tourism encounters marked as more authentic are those that approach a kind of presentation quality that is markedly for locals, yet open to allowing foreigners to witness-spectate-participate. Romo reminds us that this (staged) authenticity of Brazilian identity in Bahia is often manipulated by the government in order to sidestep quality of life improvements for Black people. The 20th Century is when the reinvention of Bahia transitioned. Bahia has always been a place of racial inequality, yet that transition moved how Bahia was thought of (at home and abroad). First it was a place of African backwardness, now it is considered place of African authenticity. With that understanding in place, it is again important to reiterate that Bahia has not been and will never be a place of static cultural perseverance.

Therein lies the actual authenticity of Bahia, based on its complicated history of 20th century promotion of African-ness and simultaneous Black population marginalization and violence. In that marginalization, Black people from this American hemisphere (and elsewhere) find solidarity. In the recognition of the nation-state's complicity in the continued hegemony and inequality of Black people, there is trans(post)colonial solidarity. It is precisely this unfixed cultural non-static preservation of African-ness that makes Bahia authentic through staged

authenticity. Just as an audience member at a theatrical event would never be described as believing completely what they are seeing on stage, because of idea of the suspension of disbelief. So too, should roots tourist never be thought of as believing completely what they are presented with. The myth of Mama Africa and presentation of static preservation in Brazil's living museum is a show. It is a presentation that suits economic and consumerism models of present-day globalization. Yet in a story (or in the show) there is power and possibility in the message being presented. Just because it is a myth does not make it false. Just because it is *not true* does not preclude it from being *not not true*.

3.4.3 Visiting the Boa Morte Headquarters and Museum

The Irmandade da Boa Morte (Sisterhood of Good Death), have a headquarters near the center of Cachoeira. The full name of the headquarters is *Centro Cultural da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte* (Cultural Center of the Sisterhood of Our Lady of Good Death). It was dedicated in 2014.

That headquarters has a small museum that is open to visitors for a small donation. On the day visited the museum, no other tourists were there. I was able to explore the exhibits at a slow pace. The first thing that you encounter are images of Irmandade da Boa Morte (Sisterhood of Good Death). Some of the images have explanation on placards next to them, some do not. Their clothes are a main focus. In the images, you immediately notice that all the women are of advanced age –over 45+ years old-- and that they often wear white.

White is a traditional color of *Candomblé*. Many of these clothes have been studied by scholars from the *Recôncavo* region have specific meanings in *Candomblé* – the skirts, the color of the head wraps, the beads that they wear, jewelry and other paraphernalia, and the colors that they wear on certain days.

In addition to wearing white, other images show the sisters wearing colorful skirts and colorful head coverings in the Baiana (Bahian) style. The sisters also have these small red bags, they have beads that they wear around their neck and the skirts all have specific designs. I was told by people that I encountered that many of these have a

symbolism in Candomblé, but then they always stress the fact that this is a Catholic organization and, as such, they are Christians. Throughout the space there are explanations of the Festival de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte (Festival of Our Lady of Good Death).

For the individual arriving with no prior knowledge of the festival. The museum provides a good primer (albeit a cursory one) for understanding the visual language of the rituals of the sisterhood. The placards communicate, sometimes explicitly sometimes not, that the festival has been occurring for many years prior. Not all of the placards are in English, but most have a translation to English. The festival's events extend beyond the three days that are colloquially communicated to tourists. There are (non-consecutive) official events that take place starting on the first Sunday of August and intermittently extending through to the 15th of August. The first Sunday of August the sisters elect the commission for the leadership of the festival for the following year. The following weekend, on the second Saturday of August, there is a general collection whereby the sisters go out into the streets of Cachoeira and collect contributions from the public. The actual festival-proper, which is three official days, takes place August 13-15.

The placards explain: on the first day, the sisters wear all white and conduct a memorial mass for the deceased sisters and the delivery of deceased souls at the feet of Mary (Mother of Jesus). After a processional, there is a white supper of fish with bread and wine. On the second day, there is a mass for the Lady of Good Death (Mary) and then there is, again, a procession through the city. On the third day, there is a festive mass to celebrate the Ascension of the Virgin (Mary). There is a procession with the statue of Our Lady of Glory (Mary). The new Board of the Sisterhood takes office for leadership of the following year. On the third day, after the processional, there is a lunch of feijoada (a bean dish), and then a stew and caruru (no explanation is given about what caruru is). And then at night, there's samba-de-roda.

Feijoada and caruru are traditional dishes of the *Recôncavo* region. Feijoada, the bean dish, includes beef, rice, beans, and fried pork. Caruru is a puree side dish (with a starchy quality) made of okra, shrimp, peanuts, and herbs. The inclusion of food during the festival is one of the many ways that the sisterhood invite tourists to participate. Because you are participating it is as though you are less of a tourist and more of a guest in the town.

The traditional food also gives that the impression that the events of the festival days are “traditional” and the order of ritual is to be observed. There is *samba-de-roda* that continue for an additional two days after the festival-proper.

Throughout the museum, you encounter images of previous generations of sisters and also of posters that mark different events that have happened in the past, locally and regionally. There are pictures of them holding candles on top of staffs that they carry. The sisters, on one of the nights, wear black dresses with black and red scarves. Aside from the mannequins with examples of the vestments and pictures of previous generations, the museum has small statues, figurines, approximately four feet in length, and they are religious relics to be used in the ritual during the Catholic Mass and also through the processions. They are behind glass and everything about the presentation communicates reverence. The cloth appears to be very delicate and fine and of great meaning. The statue itself is dressed in very fine garments and presented as if lying down on a bed.

There is a mannequins exhibit of a procession, with the sisters holding a replica of the statue that is to be venerated during the procession. The mannequin life-sized representations are dressed just as the sisters are dressed on one of the nights.

***The placards explain** that: the statues used by the sisterhood – they are seen through the processions and they are constructed using wooden slats to make them lighter – similar to what was used in Christian theater in Europe during the Middle Ages. The church encouraged religious orders lay associations to use these types of religious imagery that were ornately clad in silk and lace with rhinestones embroidery using gilded thread in addition to decorative jewels. The vestments the sisterhood uses to dress the statue of the Virgin Mary are a testament to its tradition of quality beauty and artistic perfection, most notably the white garments made from the finest embroidery. The procession that takes place on the 14th begins with a funeral mass for the Our Lady in the casket. The procession passes through the streets in a ceremony that symbolizes the burial of Mary. Tourists and residents of Cachoeira accompany the sisters to concentrate all their focus and their faith on the Lady as they walk. **This is a solemn day.** The sisters wear mourning attire. The mourning attire is black uniforms, white blouses and headdresses. And a respectful observance of a dramatized wake for the Lady. The sisters equate this feeling with that of holding a wake for a loved one.*

The pictures and placards give clues as to the meanings behind the rituals. They coincide with guide books, actual guides, websites, and printed materials in the town explain about the festival. In a way, the museum and all the explanatory materials serve to contextualize the event for the outsider. It is similar to a program (i.e., playbill) before a play, one that encapsulates dramaturgical note, programs note, tell us who the characters are, allude to the costumes, and give us clues as to how the guest is allowed to participate. In this way the building is performing as a kind of architectural sign post that gives clues about what is the beginning of your own meaning

making. It is performing by informing. By telling us that the second night is a “respectful observance of a dramatized wake,” it is an invitation to perform in the drama/story. It is giving you permission to be solemn, as it is simultaneously revealing that solemnity is the expected convention. You have, or are becoming rather, an integral part of the performance that is about to take place. As this is happening, you do become aware, that unless you read that specific placard with care, or someone gave you instruction in colloquial conversation, you would not know these clues. You would not be invited in the same way. You would not have received the necessary information to be a part of the play. The emancipatory possible is increased by the invitation to be a part, not by the missing of that information. The tourist must seek it. Also, if the tourist should find it, they are limited by their knowledge of Portuguese or English in order to access the invitation.

3.4.4 Talking with a Sister of Boa Morte

To a certain extent, specific types of tourists understand that everyday life for Afro Brazilian’s differ from performances of folklore that they are presented with. No roots tourists I encountered believed that the women of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) dress this way all year or perform these rights all year. The festival taking place on a specific series of days, yearly, is recognized to be a different moment than everyday life. It is a performance outside of daily life. Still, the sisters belong to the sisterhood all year, even if they live in different towns, they do not just “put on” sisterhood for the festival. They put on the clothes and perform the rituals as prescribed by their organization in perpetuity.

The day before, you begin to see sisters walking around Cachoeira especially near the headquarters. You might see them sitting on the steps in between the back of the headquarters where you go into the lobby and eating and kitchen area and the small chapel, which is at the top of these steps. You might see them sitting there having a chat with each other or having a chat with a local resident. Or in my case, a chat with a tourist. And they are very open, they

are very interested in communicating and sharing, perpetuating the knowledge of what the festival is. And so, from even one or two days before, you see a few sisters and as the day goes by you see more and more as they begin to arrive in anticipation of the festival.

In a conversation that I had with one of the sisters on the steps the day before, she told me that she doesn't live Cachoeira, that she is a resident of another town in Brazil and comes for the festival as a member of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). When she comes to Cachoeira it's an opportunity to see the other sisters that are part of this organization. It's a highlight of her year, she told me. It's a chance to participate and be a part of something that is of great meaning to her.

They usually, when they are in public, are not in their street clothes. They're usually in more presentational clothes specifically white if it's before the first day on August 13th. So, this was on August 12th and any sister that I saw walking around, unless she was on her way to go do something, was very open to speaking with me. In particular, one or two sisters started seeing me, you know, around Cachoeira and would say "Hi" after meeting me the first time.

They remembered me specifically as a tourist, but also, I introduced myself as a researcher and they were even more interested in just sharing what their experience has been and their knowledge of what happens. When they do tell you what happens, it is not a deep or critical evaluation. When they tell you what happens there, essentially, just clueing you in to, you know, the logistics of: "On this day this happens, on this day what happens here means this." And then they also attempt to give you some pointers, right? So, they tell you, "Hey, show up at this time so that you can get something to eat," or, "Don't mill about after a certain procession because then the line for food will be too long," or, "The best party, sort of dance is at this moment behind the headquarters." These are all informal conversations that lets them get to know you and you get to know them; it's entirely voluntary. The sister's I encountered did not speak English.

The common gesture that is used is to approach them, be open and smile and then let them acknowledge you. That is to say, that if they are in the middle of a conversation you don't want to interrupt so you wait politely. Then once the previous person and/or the sister that they are talking to, you know, gives you some attention then you approach and kiss one of their hands. So, you offer your hand, if they take your hand in a gesture of good faith – the same way you would approach someone and shake hands, you offer your hand, they take your hand, you kiss the top part of their

hand and if they know you and if they have seen you they might kiss yours back. If they do not, that is also okay. I did see a couple of people show respect by touching the feet. Yeah, so, after they were finished talking or after they were finished with the kissing of the hand they might also kiss their own hand and then touch the feet in a sign of respect or slightly bow as they exited the conversation.

The sisters are also very open to taking pictures, because everyone has a phone in their pocket now. Part of the festival is showing that you were there and so people not only take pictures of them, take pictures of the headquarters, take pictures of the mass, but they also take a bunch of selfies with them. The sisters are very open to it. They are there in a religious official –official through their own organization, not the Catholic Church-- capacity as members of the sisterhood that put on this festival and so they're very serious during the moments when they are in the processional or for the mass or for the food and whatnot.

In moments that are not part of the official festival in their veneration and processions and such they, you know, they're very open to taking a picture with you. They're very open asking you where you're from. They are interested in why you are there, you know, where did you hear about us, you know. And so, they will take a selfie with you, no problem.

As you walk with the sisters you not only feel a part of the story, they tell you about themselves: that they are paying back a promise. Walking with them is more than proximity during the processional. Walking with the sisters is literal, yes, but it is also metaphorical (and experiential); to walk with them is to accompany, to be with, to walk alongside. As a result of that communication (verbal and physical), you also feel a sense of privilege to be allowed to take part. I can only imagine that that increases, the feeling of being a part and sense of privilege, by those that are Afro-descendant themselves. Although there are great numbers of people at this event, and the streets feel “full,” and at times you are squished as you walk through the streets of Cachoeira, there is also a simultaneous feeling of knowing something others do not. For non-roots tourists this probably increases the authenticity, but not necessarily the meaning. Whereas for roots tourists, to *have* and to *know* something that is uniquely yours through spiritual and ethnic

connection (albeit be based on origin stories and myths) is a powerful thing. The festival then becomes an example of synchronicity and survival, of nation-state appropriation, of African-ness on display, on the transition from backwardness to authenticity, all of these things simultaneously. The simultaneous historical and theoretical understanding, I argue is what draw roots tourists to what I just mentioned. In this complicated conflagration of identity that is hemispheric African descendant, constructed, but no less powerful; authentic because of stage to authenticity and tourism, but no less emancipatory. These Black women that are part of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) give roots tourists the opportunity to be a part of the sisterhoods promise and therefore a story with great meaning to these women. The participation in that perpetual yearly veneration gives roots tourists the opportunity to impact their own stories through slight changes, changes with emancipatory possibility. What the roots tourist receives is an intangible effect from an encounter with an intangible cultural heritage, that could potentially have very tangible results back home.

3.4.5 Meeting People

It is common to continuously meet people that you have seen before. Maybe on the bus from Salvador, or from walking around. From Salvador is about two hours to get to Cachoeira, if you take a small shuttle bus.

If you're a tourist by yourself, you take a shuttle bus and that shuttle bus takes two hours from what they call the rodoviaria or the bus station in Salvador to the rodoviaria or bus station in either São Félix and Cachoeira. Along the way, the roads are one way each way and they- you might be on that small bus with tourists that are coming and going or local residents, you know, people that are asking you if you want to buy something from the windows as you stop and as you're in traffic. The traffic increases incredibly as the festival approaches. And so, you know, that two-hour trip might turn into three or more.

It's very common in Brazil if you are walking by a restaurant and there's a friend that you know, if you're not on a way to do something yourself you might stop and say, "Hello," and they might invite you for a *cafezinho*, a small espresso, Brazilian coffee. Or they might even invite you to sit down and have a beer with them. This is very common in Brazil as you are walking around.

Cachoeira also boasts one or two liquor distilleries. The local liquors are flavored and so they have a myriad of dozens of flavors of different local fruits and common flavors such as, you know, raisin, plum, cherry, and a myriad more of common fruits to the region. And these liquors that are consumable in small quantities because they are very sweet in a lot of instances.

At one of the liquor distilleries, I met a very good contact, a local professor that answered many of my questions. When you meet someone in Cachoeira they introduce you to someone else that they know. Another example: I met a tour guide as he was having his lunch. I said "Hello" to him and he immediately invited me for a beer. And then he said, "Are you doing anything?" I said, "No," and he said, "Well, I'm going to my sister's house," which was two blocks away and so we went together and had a small something to eat.

For those that wish to involve themselves more, the opportunities abound. For example, you wait in the food queue and eat with the sisters (and other tourists) on several of the days. While you're in that line you can converse with the person in front or behind you if you're Portuguese is sufficient for such communication. Additionally, because the spectator-participants or from places other than Brazil, they may find connections with each other, if they are from the same country or speak the same language. A bond forms between you and the other participants. Given that you keep seeing the same people over and over, the festival and the focus on the sisters' doing, provides common ground. If you are a foreigner (and most people are) given that Cachoeira is such a small town, it is easy to make connections. Especially when something has drawn you to this place for this festival at the exact same moment as the other people you meet. Even though the festival

would have happened with or without any specific tourist present, the specific tourists that are present become an inextricable part of that year's festival.

This is a way that you build networks in Brazil. The best thing that I could have done was to just be completely open and not have somewhere to go. Every time I met someone, that person introduced me to two to three other people. We might spend several hours talking and they might hear about my project and say, "Oh, you need to go speak with so-and-so or there's this book at the bookseller, you know, two days from now he'll be at this exact spot. Why don't you tell him that I sent you?" You might also get invited to a public humanities or public intellectual interaction. This is in seamless in Brazil and in the *Recôncavo* region.

And, again, you see the same people, the local residents and local students and local professors and tourists as well – they get invited to- I got invited to a book signing and so it's a book release party. And some of those books or movies or theater or art or dance or performance piece, you know, the small theater in town is where they always happen. And so, you can buy the book beforehand if you want or you can peruse it to see if you want to buy it. Then you go in, it could be a two-hour panel and, you know, not only people from the local university go, it's a totally normal thing for residents from the area to access these things. And so, there's seamless public humanities, public intellectualism with the actual public unlike the United States where college campuses are rather insular. In Brazil, I was able to attend two or three events that local individuals that I had met invited me to. And at those same events I would see other local people and they would say "Hello" to me, they knew my name, they knew where I was from, they knew what I was about and what I was doing. And they were, you know, really interested in, you know, what I had been looking at or studying or, you know, what project I was doing and also introducing me to more people, growing my network.

Again, it was all about being open because at any moment somebody could have said, "Oh, I'm going to this, I'm going to a party or a dinner. I'm going to the next event, you want to come with me?" And so, if you're busy then you're cutting yourself off from that experience and the serendipity of field work. Some of these events had nothing to do with the Sisterhood of Good Death but some did and so they would show you images and tell you what their arguments were in their work and what they experienced or researched.

3.4.6 The Festival-Proper Begins

The origin story in combination with the perpetuity this public performance of private beliefs gives the *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death) the high staged authenticity that roots tourists seek to connect with. It places Black women of advanced age at the center of a public performance and in doing so mirrors exactly the contradiction identified by Romo in her living museum argument. The Black women are promoted by tourism boards and tourism companies as living and breathing examples of African-ness in Bahia. Their African heritage is lauded, while their place in society as Black women remains marginal. Even so, alongside this example of contradictory inequality, there is also the possibility created by performance. The origin story becomes an antecedent event and the performance's perpetuity gives the current year's festival a specific relationship within the time line of the festivals that have come before and the festivals that will come after. The sisters of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) form part of the linked solidarity that is transtemporal.

Once the festival begins, many people around the town are milling about. But, there's a transformation that occurs from this sleepy place, this small, small town in the Recôncavo region to a tourist destination. So, for these three to five days, depending on what your interest is as a tourist, the town itself in an entirety and the surrounding areas because people need places to stay – all of the hotels are full. The rooms that are offered in these hotels or local bed and breakfast-type of spots are- everything is full. Everything – the price is double, and all the restaurants are full, and the bars are full and you see quadrupling of the people on the street. And as it gets closer to the festival, you know, tens turn into hundreds turn into, potentially, thousands of people that are just, like, around, you know, on the streets. Not everybody stays for the whole festival or even if they do on a particular evening, they might not stay for the whole procession. It just so happened that I was there for this festival and to study this festival for this chapter in this dissertation, but not everyone was and so you could go in and out. It's a very porous event. You can jump in, you can jump out. You're able to integrate yourself as much or as little as you want.

The steps of the area behind the headquarters that lead to the chapel are where people begin to congregate for the beginning of the festival on the first night. You see people dressed in white and it is obvious that, you know, those are the people that are there to sort of participate in the festival more either because they've read about it, been told about it. And then you see other

tourists in non-white clothing and/or residents that just decided to come by although most of the residents that I met were in white because they knew that this first evening you wore white.

As the crowd begins to gather, the space around you and personal space becomes much smaller. You, again, begin to notice people that you have seen before and say “Hello” to them. And those that are more interested begin to try to get closer and closer to try to get a great picture. Inside, wearing white, are several key individuals that are associated either with the festival itself, the sisterhood in general, or the town. So, as you walk around you find that there are key individual residents who are obviously part of the tapestry of the town and have prominent positions, either officially or unofficially in the happenings of the town. And so, inside of the chapel, even before the sisters get there to participate in their mass and veneration of the Lady of Good Death and to celebrate on the first night their own previous predecessors within the sisterhood, or the women who have passed away that had been sisters before.

The chapel itself above all the steps has sort of a wooden fence around it in front of the area in front of the big door that leads into their personal and private chapel for the Sisterhood of Good Death. You might see wearing white, these prominent community figures, such as, one of the local business owners of one of the bed and breakfasts, such as, a local historian of the Sisterhood of Good Death. Such as, a gentleman who is very, very well-known in regard to the logistics of the festival and is very much obviously a leader in communication between different stakeholders and parties. His name was **Valmir**. The name of the shopkeeper was **Rosangela**.

Inside, you begin to see the sisters congregating during their small chapel ceremony. The memorial mass is semi-closed to the public, it’s just them in small chapel near their headquarters. You do not get to hear what is happening in there until they begin singing or chanting. But, you can see through the open door. You can see them lighting candles, you can see them speaking to each other, you can see them praying. Everyone has their phone or camera, recording device, iPad out and so this is a very public event with a huge crowd and you’re just one person amongst this crowd. There’s no personal space and there is security. So, there’s gentlemen who are obviously there, in blazers, in an official capacity to do crowd control. And so, you know, as you’re on the steps and as you’re walking around you notice that these are part of the logistics of the festival. You do begin to see the crowd part and move in a very sort of organic way as- you get subtle signs from the security individuals or logistics individuals that the procession is going to begin in a certain place and that the sisters need space to walk. Again, everyone has their cell phone out and is taking pictures of their experience to commemorate their being there at the festival.

Some of the prominent individuals from the city or from Cachoeira might be helping some of the older sisters with mobility issues along, holding their hands or letting the sisters, you know, put some of their weight on them as they descend on the steps. Many of the sisters carrying their candled staffs, the staff that has the candle. And then of course, the statue comes with and is carried by, again, some of the stakeholders and well-known individuals from the community. They’re

wearing white and they're walking with the sisters and sharing in carrying the weight. But, it's obvious that certain sisters have a more prominent place and this is actually the Commission or Board of this particular year's festival. You notice that they are the ones that are carrying more of the statue's weight or longer or at the front and these sisters defer to them in terms of them being the leaders of this year's festival.

3.4.7 The First Night's Processional

As they walk, the sisters begin to sing and they give veneration through chanting, singing, clapping and these songs are very repetitive and some individuals in the audience who have been before could follow along and know some of the songs. After the women of the sisterhood leave – this is on the first night, August 13th – you can go in.

You can go into the chapel and in that moment that they leave, it transforms back into a public tourism space that is both a Catholic space, a religious space for the veneration and then also a part of this festival where the women have just been in there performing their ritual towards the statue and also towards the figure of Jesus on the cross – lighting of the candles and other Catholic rites. There is no priest at this point, it's just the sisters. And that space is immediately transformed once they leave it, once again, is a space that you can walk into, take pictures and not necessarily be part of the religion or religious beliefs, but just admire the architecture, admire the decoration, admire the event that has just happened by going in and taking pictures. You do notice that some tourists, whom are maybe Christian or Catholic, take a moment to sit down, they maybe pray a little bit, they have a private moment. And many people are taking pictures, yet it is in a respectful way – people don't really take selfies in there. They're getting close, respectfully, to the icons – iconography pictures and decorations and/or attempting to get a vision or image of the

entire space. But, you know, no one is speaking loudly. Everyone is respectful for the most part and the interaction with the space is that of understanding that is a space of religious ritual.

There is other iconography, such as, statues of priests or saints. You do see people taking pictures of themselves in the space to commemorate their being there. And, again, there is a type of unspoken respect in that- outside there's, you know, hundreds of people milling about, you know, right outside but inside, not that many people go in at the same time and so you sort of wait for, you know, a few individuals to leave before the next few individuals can go in. For the procession outside, it is very slow. So, you can walk up and get close, you can take pictures, or you can walk behind and have your own conversation. You involve yourself as much as you want and/or are able to, given the limited space. Many people are just talking and following, slowly, walking, maybe, in a- walking by or walking with.

The emancipatory possible is present in the staged authenticity of Bahia because Bahia is promoted as the most Afrocentric state within the most Afrocentric country of the hemisphere. This relates to the *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), because it is colloquially known as the most Afrocentric festival in the most traditional and Afrocentric town of the state Bahia. The festival and the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) that is central to the event, sit amongst a yearly calendar of events. That calendar is both religious and secular and marks many festivals throughout the year. These festivals (especially those of a religious nature) are considered to be examples of religious synchronicity between Christianity and *Candomblé*. This synchronicity and even events focused solely on *Candomblé* do not deter roots tourists from experiencing and participating in the legacies of the conflicted and constructed nature of African identity in Brazil. Place is context. The geography is an element that support the authenticity of this tourism encounter of the *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death).

We're still on the first night and the procession has just left from the small chapel through the route in Cachoeira. The Mary statue is on a small platform that you can raise, that is help by different people under it. It is covered in a very thin shroud that you can see through. There are decorations of flowers and also the special cloth – embroidered lace, ornamental. The streets are winding, thin, narrow, sloped at times. When people talk, they- when people walk they talk to the person next to them or they're looking to see what the sisters are doing at specific points. The small figurine and the sisters themselves will stop, turn the statue towards a very specific house and someone in the crowd whispered to me or let me know that this, apparently, is the house of a very well-known sister, a previous, you know, leader in their group.

As people walk, they continue to take pictures. As people walk, you notice that certain people in the- from the tourist crowd, as they get closer, are asked to partake of carrying the statue. It is not something you can just walk up and do, it is something that is if you're nearby and you have an open energy, one of the community leaders who's walking there might say, "Hey, go ahead and step in," or, "Why don't you carry it for a couple of blocks?" A lot of it isn't even spoken, it's just sort of a tap on the shoulder and, you know, a slight pointing and then from that you're able to see, you know, what the person is intending for you to do. As you walk, you see other participants and tourists take pictures behind, as well as forward because you're in this throng of people, surrounded by people.

After the time in the chapel and after taking a rather long route, the sisters arrive with the statue of Mary to the official chapel at the headquarters. And so here, you see the sisters go in first. There are already people inside. The sisters have a dedicated and reserved area. And the few people of all the people outside that can get inside, do – and many squeeze in and many choose not to go in at all. At this point, there is a priest and there is a small mass that happens. You see tourists at the balcony's windows and inside of the museum where, you know, you could peer from above and participate in the mass. Even within the mass, as the mass is happening people are taking pictures. They all, you know, their phones are out and they're trying to participate as much as they can.

3.4.8 The Mass on the First Night (and the moments after)

During the mass, at a certain point, the priest comes down from the elevated platform and dais and he comes down and all of the sisters kind of get up and surround the statue and venerate together. They make a circle around it and chant and pray. All of them are wearing white, all of them are wearing white headdresses very reminiscent of Bahia's baianas, the women of Bahia that you might see in Salvador that are the street vendors or the people who ask you to take pictures in a very folkloric costume. The sisters, what they are wearing on the first night is very reminiscent of that. That, of course, is a derived dress from Candomblé – of wearing all white, of wearing the headdress, of wearing the beads and other accoutrements.

Once the sisters are finished with the mass, the mass lets out and people are able to file out or leave. And the museum is open to the public at this point. So, the three nights, the three evenings are represented by costuming that is on mannequins inside of the lobby of the museum. And here you can observe the minor details, minute details that you, perhaps, cannot observe when you are walking around. But, you see everything from the staff that holds the candle to the beads around

their neck to the specific bags that are a burgundy color with gold embroidery to the skirts that they're going to wear on other evenings other than this first one.

There is a small sales area in the museum where you might be able to buy commemorative T-shirts or commemorative beads or other, you know, memory items – souvenirs. Around the back where the headquarter area that leads into the kitchen, a line is beginning to be formed. So, the sisters have gone in for their dinner, the white dinner, and they go in all together. There is a large banner outside of the headquarters, which in the back has a pink facade. And so, the large banner read, “Fiesta da Boa Morte” or “Festival of Good Death 2016.” At the bottom there are also logos for different regional organizations that sponsor the event. The many people that- as many people that are there attempt to get as close to the sisters as possible.

The sisters, though, are in, you know, in an area of this lobby, kitchen, dining area that's very, very small and so just them fit around this table and the tourists kind of have to stand back. It's very difficult to see. People are raising their hands to try to get the, you know, the picture from the camera or their phone. It's very obvious that the sisters are having sort of a private moment and then behind a caged window area it's- you can see the food that is going to be passed out being plated. The gentlemen that are providing security are inside. They wear distinctive navy blazers and they are constantly looking to make sure that they are seen in a very conspicuous way to promote or dissuade anyone from not acting in accordance with the norms.

3.4.9 The Meal in White

At this point, people are just milling about. A lot of people are waiting outside, but a line is beginning to form for the food.

Once the sisters are finished eating, they approach the sort of caged kitchen area and one of the local leaders associated with the festival begins to pass out food. At this point, the sisters are sitting down. There are approximately 20-30 sisters present, but with the number of tourists and locals in the space it is difficult to tell. Again, though, once the food starts getting passed out they are sitting down to eat. The foods are all traditional Bahian dishes. The sisters are sitting down at the head of the table or towards the head of the table are the women who are designated as the leaders of this year's- the Commission of this year's festival. The few sisters that I met the day before as I'm, you know, taking my own pictures and taking in the experience, you know, they say “Hello” to me and, you know, they make sure that I feel welcomed there.

Once the sisters are finished eating, they come outside to the steps and they interact with the public. They sit for a moment after their meal. If you have a question or wish to talk to them you may at this time. Some of them are talking with friends, relatives, family members and many tourists are interested in speaking with them and knowing about this ritual, you know, why.

And the story that gets repeated is that their sisterhood is paying back, their sisterhood is paying homage to the Virgin Mary or the Mother of Christ because they took a vow. At the time of emancipation in Brazil from legalized human chattel slavery- at the time of emancipation, many brotherhoods and sisterhoods of already freed black Afro-descendant former enslaved Africans, prayed that the time of slavery would end. And so, the myth is that this particular- the women of this particular sisterhood prayed that they would be able to buy some of their family members and they did. And they prayed that should the horrors of slavery in Brazil end, should emancipation come, that they would venerate, celebrate, give thanks by performing this ritual every August 13, 14 and 15 in perpetuity.

And so, they explained that to the tourists, they explained why it is that they participate, they explain, maybe, how long they have been as part of the sisterhood.

This fluidity of African identity is an integral part of *Baianidade* (Bahian-ness) and therefore *Brazilidade* (Brazilin-ness) does not negate the power of Bahia as Brazil's living museum. In fact, it reinforces the "living" part, of that living museum. Roots tourists that seek out and visit Bahia do so to connect to African identity, with the understanding that the museum they are visiting is a living breathing thing. It is this very changeability that draws them. The transition of Bahia from a symbol of African backwardness to African authenticity is what draws them. It would be impossible (and foolhardy) to say that all roots tourists have this understanding in mind, because we cannot see into people's minds or hearts. It would also be foolhardy to conjecture that all roots tourists necessarily engage with the *Baianidade* (Bahian-ness) they seek at the critical and theoretical level. I am sure some people go there and literally believe that Africa has survived in the people and culture of Bahia in the same way since the era of enslavement. My point is that it is very possible for a tourist to engage *Boa Morte* critically and theoretically, and in that possibility lies the emancipatory possible.

3.4.10 Second Day of Festival-Propor; Day (before *Boa Morte* event)

The following day, as you wake up, walk around, you'll see- you'll definitely see people from the night before. So, some tourist visitors have left, some have arrived. There are huge air-conditioned buses for tourist groups. These are probably organizations that rent these buses in order to come to the event. Some religious, some not. You can tell because some of the groups have, they're wearing all the same shirt and it, says what parish they're from or what religious group they're from and did they come together to partake of the festival.

Another element is the feeling of being surrounded by Black people. Several of the roots tourists I engaged with in conversation mentioned the power of both the geography and the Black majority population. It is as though “double consciousness” and “nervous conditions” (of being a marginalized Afro-descendant person) can be temporarily alleviated by being in this specific place around people that are Black, consider themselves to be Black, who the state also marginalizes, that live in a place where the constructed identity shifted from backwardness to authentic. Even if the authenticity is constructed, it does not negate the alleviation of being able to drop the mask marginalization forces Black people to wear.²⁵⁹ This is a mask that I will never understand as a non-Black person but can empathize with as an individual of another marginalized group --Latinx people in United States. Does the constructed nature of this Bahian identity negate this alleviated feeling? I do not believe this to be the case. In fact, I believe most roots tourists are unabashed by constructed identities and recognize that what they are shown within tourism encounters lies on spectrum of staged authenticity, even if they are unable to articulate it as such.

And the people you met the night before, you might see them walking around, you'll say “Hello,” they'll say “Hello” to you. And there is events- because it is known that many- so many people are in Cachoeira, the area of Cachoeira and São Félix, for the festival, during the day when there's nothing scheduled with the Sisterhood of Boa Morte there are other groups that are, Afro-Brazilian, Recôncavo region, religious organizations specifically of Candomblé that have, like a day festival where there's samba de roda, where there's dancing, eating, drinking, but it's a very public festival or event during the days of the festival.

²⁵⁹ When I mention the mask marginalization forces Black people wear, I am alluding to the “real apprenticeship [as a Black person in Europe]” and “feeling the weight his melanin,” as written about by Frantz Fanon. Frantz Fanon. 1952. *Black Skin, White Masks*. 126-129.

With all of these people and these different events in these three days, street vendors come of all types selling all sorts of souvenirs, handmade crafts, woodworkers, leatherworkers, individuals that they make an impromptu stall and they sell, also, food. And, part of it is trying new things and, different stalls will have different offerings in terms of either souvenirs or food. And, it's clear that the number of people have also, brought these sales people to come to Cachoeira. Aside from that, these sort of daytime events, have a musical component. And so, they might have different bands that are playing at different times and dancing in front.

One of the people that I met the night before, this small group of young, mid-20s travelers from Rio de Janeiro, they let me know that another organization in town was going to be offering a public meal. And so, if you came to their headquarters, you could enjoy and partake and look at the vistas from there, the balcony of their headquarters and be in the lobby of their headquarters. It was Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Bahian organization, but it was not clear, what their intended goals were. Let's say, no one introduced themselves from the organization, they were just very welcoming. They did not know exactly who we were, and it didn't matter. We were in Cachoeira in that moment and therefore we were welcome. And we enjoyed a plate of food and company and drink.

This also gave a chance for me to informally talk with the group of young people that told me about this public meal and to see some of the residents that I saw the night before that were leaders in Cachoeira small town and even related to the festival. Apparently, everyone knows about this public meal or not everyone, but the people in Cachoeira know. And so, I was glad to be invited and I got a chance to talk to a couple of people that I saw the night before and really grow a small network of individuals that got to see me and join in partaking of what Cachoeira had to offer during the Fiesta da Boa Morte. Each conversation I was asked, "Where are you from?" "How did you hear about this?" you know, "Why are you here?" and, "What do you think about it so far?" "Are you enjoying yourself?" These are all ways to make myself visible as an individual and also to put out an energy of openness that could be felt even beyond my limited Portuguese, that could be felt- and therefore I might learn more and find out about other events and happenings and cultural and social possibilities for interaction that all form part of the festival even though

they're not necessarily associated with Boa Morte the organization, Cachoeira itself comes alive with these opportunities during Fiesta da Boa Morte.

The next day, as I was partaking of these events and invitations, Cachoeira is a small place and so in order to get from one place to another you might cross the center square or pass by the headquarters of the Sisterhood of Good Death. And so, on the steps in front of their small chapel, the sisters happen to be organized in, in their white dresses from the night before but also with their distinctive red bags.

And so, the purpose of this was they were clearly being interviewed by regional journalists. And so, a couple of them were answering questions of the journalists while the rest sat behind as part of a backdrop. They were just laughing and talking amongst themselves and making sure to promote the organization, to answer questions about the history of their organization, again, repeating the myth that has been passed down.

While that's happening, the lobby area of the headquarters where the meal was passed out the night before is open. And so, you could just walk in. There are many, many pictures on the wall of previous festival dates, of different sisters who have passed or been leaders in the organization. And so, this is very much a public space. This is an inviting space with clear delineations of some areas where you shouldn't go like office space or private rooms. But, for the most part, as long as the doors are open, you can go in and look at pictures, ask questions and partake of the festival that way if you wish.

When you do go in there, you also see preparations for the following night. You see the cooking that is happening for other meals and you see what could be volunteers or could be paid contract laborers doing different prep work. There is also an element of people resting. So, as this festival is going on, in the night before and this, the second evening or night, there are moments when you sort of have taken in a lot, you've talked to a lot of people, you've gone to the headquarters again, you, maybe, have passed by some stalls. But, then it's time for you to have snack, eat a meal or go back to your room and rest. I found myself, very sort of leisurely walking around and then realizing that, it would be better if I took a small rest and I saw that other people were doing the same thing. So, the festival and your participation in the festival is at your own pace. There are set times, such as the Boa Morte rituals and masses and processions, all take place at, at a specific time, but during the other times, it's much more free, freeform time.

3.4.11 Second Day of Festival-Proper; Night (second *Boa Morte* event)

On the second evening, people begin to gather again on the steps or around the headquarters, on the streets near there and they're waiting for the mass to take place. And so, you'll see once more people and more people begin to arrive, the sisters whom are now dressed in black skirts, white tops, still a white headdress but this time it's less of a Bahian and more of a habit – a type of nun's habit – all in the cleanest white with a red sash over the left shoulder. They do carry their staffs that carry the candles and they approach the church.

This is the church that is inside of their headquarters and they're even followed by a local marching band in addition to the many, many, many tourists. The sisters take a moment to regroup before they go inside for the mass. Again, the couple of local leaders and the security provide sort of a barrier between the tourists and the sisters, many of whom are older women and so they can't necessarily walk that fast and so they hold the crowd back from encroaching on their limited space. The red sashes also have an accompanying black sash on their shoulder.

When walking around, you might, again, meet different people and, someone randomly in the crowd, who remembered that I was a researcher from the United States, said, "Oh I just met another person who is also a professor from the United States," and they introduced me to her. Turns out that she was from Miami, as well, my hometown. And so, we instantly connected and shared a conversation and made a connection. Even though we are from the same country and from the same area, that place and that event made that connection possible.

Once the mass is done, a processional continues and, you keep seeing key individuals who are from Cachoeira who, are the specific shop owners or leaders in the community that are always around the sisters and attempting to help. Plus, of course, the security now has increased. And I even saw, a few people taking advantage of the camera. So, the journalists and more large-scale media cameras, not the individual tourist but, more like video cameras from established news channels – I saw some tourists taking advantage to promote political ideas. And so, they had a sign that said- one individual had a sign that said, "*Fora Temer*," asking the current administration to be ousted, to leave because they saw it as illegitimate in 2016. This was a very, very specific moment where the female president at the time had been removed from power due to scandals

related to some possible misuse of funds. And so, a new government figure, leader or president and administration had been installed and so this individual and many of the people that I met were interested in that person and their administration not being there and leaving.

On this evening, the sisters wear the black skirts and their sash on the shoulder of red and black in order to commemorate the death of Mary. The statue, again, is walked through the streets. It's the same statue from the night before, but this time it has a golden cover that goes with it. And so, several people need to carry the platform that has the statue on it, but then four additional people need to be walking in step with them to keep the canopy of this golden fabric above. And so, throughout the procession, which again, is very slow because they are many, many tourists there, there are times when one got in front of the other and then that person was obviously too tired or couldn't keep step, so it was passed to someone else.

3.4.12 Increased Participation (and closer observations)

The solidarity in *Boa Morte* is based on syncretic beliefs that combine Catholicism and *Candomblé*. The aspects that are forefronted for the public all depend on who the sisters (or their organization) is communicating with. This perpetuity of the veneration and associated solidarity combined with the sister's organization being one of the last surviving sisterhoods from the time of emancipation, the *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death) the level of staged authenticity to attract roots tourists. This performance in perpetuity and its public components such as the processions, waiting for the sisters outside their places of worship, worshipping alongside them (if you are so inclined), the public meals and the public secular party that ensues beyond on the third day, all allow tourists to become part of the performance. Because of the festival format and public nature of *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), tourists are able to participate by spectating or by doing. This is not only referring to roots tourists, but all tourists, for whatever the reason is that they have come there. The participation aspect can be as much or as little as individual wishes. Depending on want or need, tourists are able to step in and out, of a performance that is going to happen, with or without you.

On this second night, I felt comfortable getting closer. So, getting closer to where the sisters are walking and also where the statue carriers were. I felt as if the energy was such that the people around it, the few key figures from the community, the volunteers and the security people had seen me enough that it was just okay, that it was clear that I was there for the festival, that I was not attempting to draw attention to myself or to interrupt and that I wanted to participate fully as much as I could. And so, they, without words, allowed me to enter a space that was closer.

Where some tourists were on the peripheries taking pictures only or talking with their friends only and then walking away, I was there for the entire processional. And I was taking pictures, as well, but I was making sure that I was in the center of it. And seeing this, they even allowed me to walk next to the people who were carrying the canopy, the golden canopy and the statue herself.

*At one point, the person in front of me became tired and they just passed it off to me and so I immediately put my phone away and I walked and I helped and I was holding up the canopy or holding up the platform that had the statue on it. In that moment **I was not worried about documenting**. In that moment I wasn't thinking about, anything other than the weight of it. So, it was fairly uncomfortable to have to walk very, very close to other individuals to maintain the shape of the canopy and also the level of the platform where the small statue was because, some individuals were helping to carry but their height might be different and so they would need to put it off their shoulder or hold it above their head or, so that it would maintain level. And so, the weight itself, the walking slowly, the proximity to the person in front of you or behind you – so there were moments that people would sort of step on your heel and also just, trying to balance.*

There are moments where we would all slow down and feel that things were level before we kept going. And then, also, there were moments when the sort of leader in that moment, community leader, would say “Stop” and then you would have to sort of point the statue towards a specific house and then it would go back to the regular speed of the processional in the streets. Additionally, it's not something where you can just hold on to it.

At a certain point someone taps you on the shoulder and they want to jump in and they want to help. And it's not really a situation where you can be like, “Oh, no, don't?” If someone taps you on the shoulder, you give it to them. As long as they can hold the weight and as long as they're able to keep it level then, they keep going and you step out. You can stay nearby, you can take, more of a break, if you need, further away.

On this evening, I did notice a group of older Afro-Bahian women, Afro-Brazilian-Bahian women, who were in white. So, they're not in the Black skirts and the white top and quasi-habit over the head, they were in white skirts and then T-shirts. And I asked, what organization they

were from and actually they were applicants or novitiates of the sisterhood. So, they were up-and-coming sisters or novice sisters who walk behind the full members. They're also, helping out and volunteers and helping carry and helping to direct or move the space in order for there to be this space for the platform to walk.

That entire processional leaves from the back of the headquarters and goes through the town of Cachoeira to then return to the headquarters and go in for an additional mass or service. The sisters stop before they go in. The crowd makes more space for them and they wait for the platform with the small statue and the canopy above it to reach where they are which is the entrance of their small church inside of the headquarters. At this point, the sisters are very deliberate in what they do. Certain ones have the role of taking in the statue and the canopy. And so, at this point, anyone who is a tourist and not a member of their organization, is asked to sort of step back behind the security people. And the sisters, even though they are fairly slight, fairly short in some instances and quite advanced in years, they take the weight of it. And even though they have trouble with it, they want to carry it themselves. And so, from the door to the interior of the church they, together, carry the statue of Mary.

Outside, the marching band plays. It's a marching band, they were dressed in white pants, blue shirts and had many wood- I'm sorry, wind instruments – horns, drums. And they played outside as the mass got, ready to go or as everyone was taking their seats. At this point, you're expecting a mass or something similar and yet it doesn't really happen.

This is more of a private prayer between the sisters around the statue, but the Catholic priest isn't there and his, assistants are not there. And the public is just sort of milling about as this happens and then the sisters just, leave. They, don't necessarily leave together, some stay behind in a moment of private prayer, but now the statue is left for the public to come and say a private prayer or touch the shawl or touch the head through the shroud or touch the feet or touch the lace.

This becomes part of your experience there – seeing the other people who were there yesterday and during the day but now seeing them in a moment of reverence. The other tourists that, perhaps like yourself, have been there since the beginning. The statue being looked on with reverence because the sisters look on it with reverence and the processional through the town and now this is a culminating moment where you yourself could get to do what the sisters just did. And sometimes it's short, sometimes it's obviously of great meaning to that individual and sometimes it's someone just going through the motions of it or taking a picture of it and leaving. But, it's a public, open moment and space for you to interact with the relic.

Outside, the sisters pose for pictures. Behind them, the novitiate sisters who are applying to join the sisterhood, help the older women in the sisterhood whose mobility is impaired, to climb the hill in order to reach the back part of their headquarters. As the sisters make their way up the hill, not all of them go together. It is no longer one big group, just one-off here, one-off there. One may be going down another side street; they split up at this point. Again, you have people in the lobby and food area. This time there is no serving of food necessarily.

There are the sisters sitting down, resting, people milling about, again, walking up to them, kissing their hands and if they feel so inclined, they kiss yours. There's still the asking of questions, but on this evening it's much more reserved. Given that they are enacting a wake for the death of Mary, of Our Lady of Good Death, this second evening – it's much more reserved on their part and also the tourists feel this energy as they partake.

Outside of that headquarters space, next to the small, private chapel of the organization, not the bigger public one inside the headquarters, there is a stage being constructed. So, it is a mid- it is maybe half done at this point, stage that is being constructed: sound system, canopy in case it rains, raised platform, wiring of all types, lighting. While on the two previous days, the events have been at night.

3.4.13 The Third Day of the Festival-Proper (Daytime)

On the third day, the event is earlier in the morning/afternoon. The sisters are still wearing black skirts, white tops, but now their headdresses have changed back into their Bahian wrap and they're wearing a red sash only.

Today, the third day, which is August 15, during the day now represents the Ascension of Mary, the Ascension of Mary into Heaven where she transforms from Our Lady of Good Death the night before to Our Lady of Glory the next morning. On this third day you, again, see many new tourists who have come just for this third and last day. A processional occurs, all of the sisters from the headquarters, to the local church, Catholic parish outside of their small, private one and outside of the larger one inside of the headquarters now they're going to Cachoeira's Catholic seat where the dioceses of that town happens. And there are many, many tourists. Some even blocking the entrance and then the security people and the leaders of, Cachoeira and those that are involved with the sisterhood and volunteers all have to take a moment to sort of make way to help the sisters have a clear path.

Once that path is created by the security and these volunteers, including the novitiate sisters, then the sisters go inside towards the front in order to, during this particular mass, be at the front. During this mass, also, there is a passing out of food. And so, the sisters themselves bring bread – there are baskets and baskets of bread that have been donated just for this event and the sisters pass this out to anyone that is wishing to partake. No one necessarily explains why when you're outside; given my own Catholic upbringing, I believe this may have been the moment of Communion and instead of having wafers they have actual baked bread that the sisters pass out. In addition to that, there is fruit that is passed out by the sisters to the public, not outside, but those who had been lucky enough to go inside and be inside the church.

The mass felt as if it was a regular length mass, of approximately one hour to one hour and thirty minutes. I chose to go in and out of the church at that moment. I took pictures; I was not necessarily there to “be” in the Catholic mass, but rather to observe the sister “being” there. The sisters at this point were in more of a just sitting down and watching mode. So, I felt I needed to take a moment and sort of step away because the Catholic church was full (i.e., standing room only). At this point, I had been participating intensely the prior two days, so I took a moment to myself. I went to have something to eat; to go have something to drink. There are many little stores right next door to the church in the surrounding streets.

Again, people are milling about – tourists, residents of Cachoeira, people from law enforcement, they're all sort of just milling about. They're there and while this is going on, the mass and event continue going on inside the church; outside the people just wait. When the church event is done, the sisters begin to leave in another processional back to their headquarters. And in this case, the processional will be with Our Lady of Glory statue. This statue differs because this statue is standing up as opposed to laying down. This statue is on a bed of red roses and foliage.

She is wearing blue and white and she is not covered in a shroud. She, having had ascended to Heaven, this upright posture shows this. And, again, you have people walking around and helping to carry it once the church event is finished.

3.4.14 The Statue Gets Closer to You

As the statue gets closer to you, if you're standing still or walking slowly and it- walking through the center of this large crowd you notice that she is also wearing a cape of very fine and delicate embroidery. The cape is white with peach colored accents. There are also peach roses and pink roses and white lilies that form the base of where this small statue of Mary is standing. Her hair is free-flowing and you notice the ornate metal work of the crown that she is wearing. On this day, there seem to be even more people than the night before.

There seem to be, hundreds, thousands of individuals who, again, have their phones out, they're taking selfies or turning one way, turning another way trying to capture to the size of the crowd. There's very small personal space and you're walking along and you're walking with. When the statue comes by, you get a picture of the statue as close up as you can. These are just things that everyone is doing. And if you happen to be close by and someone happens to get tired, they tap you on the shoulder – you yourself can jump in and help carry. Again, making sure that the statue stays level, and this becomes a way for you to integrate yourself. This becomes a way for you to participate even more fully, of course, by choice. So, if you want to be the tourist that just steps out of the restaurant, takes one picture and goes back into the restaurant and continues with their day, you can. If you are a religious individual that just wanted to come to the mass, you can. If you just want to be near the sisters and walking and helping with them, you can.

One of the ways in which you can help, that I was able to be a part of, happened in the latter part of this day. As the day goes on and more people arrive to the event, the streets begin to feel narrower and narrower. The space that the sisters have to walk becomes even smaller, so a ring develops around them – a ring of people [a circle of people walking in the same direction but facing them and holding hands, holding back of the crowd]. And so, this becomes a way for you to, again, participate even more fully even though you are not necessarily there for the same reasons that the sisters are.

An example of this was when I joined the novitiates and volunteers to encircle the sisters as they walked during the latter days of the festival-proper. Myself, other tourists, along with local community members and others, linked hands in a protective circle around the sisters and walked with them. Our linked arms created a protective barrier between the sisters and the public. Because of the amount of people in narrow streets, the throng of public spectator-participants, sometimes expanded and contracted in ways that would have knocked an older woman over. Knowing that this was the case, those of us at felt called to do so made sure that the crowd did not encroach upon the sister's already limited space. The people in the linked-hand circle could tell this was appreciated. As someone that was a part of the circle, I can also report that this was just as appreciated by the crowd as by the sisters. Even though our hands and bodies formed a human barrier between the sisters and the crowd, it was a permeable barrier. The crowd could see them, here them, and interact with them. We in the circle, as well as those in the crowd, played ensemble roles. As a group we (guests) were supernumeraries in comparison to the sisters (hosts) who were the leads. Those of us in the ensemble were all part of the festival and were helping the women to keep their promise.

3.4.15 Perpetuity and Survival

And so, the sisters speak about paying back this homage that they owe, this debt that they owe through their rituals and celebration of this festival.

Previous to this: You (the tourist) are there in Bahia, because you want to see, you want to know, you want to participate because you've come to Bahia and you heard, "Oh, you must go to Boa Morte," "You must go see the Sisterhood of Good Death or the Festival of Good Death," "You must see Cachoeira in August," and, "You must see this festival that is African cultural survival in the Recôncavo region since it has been going on the longest."

Another aspect of *Irmandade da Boa Morte* is that they are one of sisterhoods that has survived from the time of emancipation. And so, at a time when many, many, many sisterhoods and brotherhoods existed at that particular moment, now hundreds of years later they do not. They simply have ceased to exist as organizations whereas this one keeps going. And one way that it keeps going is because of its popularity and because of its novelty and the promotion that it receives from the tourists that go, the journalists that go, the researchers that go – these are all things that perpetuate the importance of this event and therefore make it more special if you go and therefore give the sisters- these are all mutually reinforcing aspects of this event.

The story of the festival revolved around who the women are and why they stage this veneration of Our Lady of Good Death/Glory. Roots tourists seek to be closer to the story in order to be a part of the story. Women, the organization of the sisterhood, and local people tell the story as an origin story. The women are said to be paying back a promise. This promise was made to the mother of Jesus the Christ. If the time of emancipation came, the women of the sisterhood would venerate Our Lady of Good Death/Glory, their patron saint, in perpetuity. This is where the staged authenticity of roots tourism performance lies. No representation in a theatrical setting will ever match the public performance by these women of their beliefs. It does not matter that historically and sociologically a direct connection cannot be made between the continent of Africa, the enslaved Africans brought to Brazil, emancipated Afro Brazilians immediately after the era of an enslavement, and the present-day Afro Brazilian women of the sisterhood of the death. That direct connection cannot be found because it does not exist in the realm of archive (written texts and documents). It exists in the realm of repertoire (embodied performance and scenario). It is enacted and embodied memory that is not based on truth written down, but on deep emotional and

corporeal connections to identity and pain. The pain of colonialism and of the disconnect with the idea of the continent of Africa due to human chattel slavery.

3.4.16 Finding a Way to Help and Recognizing the Church's Role

From my own personal experiences, participation took many shapes. Being there in Cachoeira before the festival began allowed for some of the sisters to recognize me as the festival took place. Their recognition of me translated into them being welcoming, saying hello, hugging me publicly, and offering me food even after the queue for the public was full. I do not feel it was charisma on my part that elicited this response. It was my excitement to be there and the respect I showed in both outward and inward communication. The sisters, along with the volunteers and prominent members of the community, knew (through our conversations) that I was there to experience and participate as much of the festival as possible. When they saw me in the throng of people during the procession they bid me come closer and offered the opportunity to carry the venerated statue. This in turn, gave me a kind of permission to become more involved and help as the festival went along. Not in any official capacity, within the limits of what the tourist-spectator could do.

I did carry the statue of Mary several times that day. There's a weight to it, there's a sacrifice to it as now you're doing it in the sun, it's very hot, you're sweating, it's August in Brazil. Even though, for them, it's not the hottest, hottest month, definitely for someone from the United States it's still very, very warm. And so, as you're walking, having to go so slow and feeling that weight and there's effort, there's discomfort, but there's also a feeling of integrating yourself and wanting to be a part as much as you can. Again, you're meeting people, as you're in this huge crowd, you're meeting people that you have met in the previous days or that you met that morning,

you introduced yourself to. There might even be someone that speaks your language if you don't speak Portuguese. For example, there was someone else that just happened to be from Miami who was, speaking English and so I approached them and said, "Oh, hello," and I introduced myself and was able to have a connection with them for a moment as two people from the same place that saw the importance of this event.

On this day, the priests and members of the Catholic representatives of the church – priests and other assistants – walked along with the processional, not the whole way. They walked, but it was very clear that it was not about them. It was very clear that the crowd did not come to see them, that no one was, around them necessarily though there was many, many, many people. It's about the statue, it's about the sisters' relationship to the statue and it's about both of those elements in relationship to everyone else, everything else and the town itself. The Catholic priests and some of these relics were not, not as much as attention was paid to them.

We were being a part of the story. It did not matter that some of the tourists may not have been Catholic. It also did not matter that some of the tourists, like myself, were not Afro-descendant. What did matter was that the individual sisters (and their organization) needed and wanted us there. We as tourists needed and wanted to be there to *witness*. They, the sisters, wanted us there to grow the size and impact of their veneration. As a participant and as a spectator, this level of involvement goes far beyond the usual consumption of "tourist ready" cultural performance. This has a higher level of staged authenticity because the sisters are not presenting representations of themselves in a theatrical setting. They are performing religious rituals and rights as part of their religious beliefs that also happen to have an inextricable connection to their Black identity. A Black identity that cannot be separated from the region called *Recôncavo* (the Afro-descendant regions between Salvador and Cachoeira, along the Paraguaso river) in Bahia. These religious rituals are publicly private, in that the public is present for private moments such as when they are praying together in the small chapel behind the headquarters, or when they are chanting to the statue before the processional inside of the larger chapel that is inside of the headquarters.

The processional slowly makes it back after walking what I would deem to be double the amount of processional, more of the town has been walked through in a winding manner on this third day and they make their way back to the headquarters. Once back at the headquarters, again, they file into the smaller church of the headquarters. The Catholic priests, again, and the sisters are all there at the front, tourists go in behind. There's boom mics, phones out, there's a lot of focus on what's happening up front and the statue is up front as well – this time, of course, upright.

3.4.17 End of this year's Festival, Beginning of Next Year's Festival

At this point, it's clear that something different is happening. It's not the same mass that just occurred earlier in the other part of the town. Now, there's more talking. The priest directly speaks to the crowd and thanks them for coming and supporting the Church and the Sisterhood. You see specific sisters that have been very much the leaders of this particular festival and it's clear that there's about to be a transition that takes place. The transition is that the three or four sisters whom have been in charge this year's festival pass on their leadership role to next year's festival committee of leaders.

They line up on the dais and with the priest there they accept the charge of making sure that the festival happens again and that it is done properly and organized properly. After that, the sisters file out. They go through their headquarters, through the museum and that's it. They go outside.

You can take pictures with them, you can see what they're wearing close up, you can ask them questions. You are able to hang out with them if you want or eat next to them if you want. And so, everyone is just sort of milling about in a very happy atmosphere.

3.4.18 The Party Begins

Shortly thereafter, the stage that has been set up the night before, the day before, is now ready to be the centerpiece of the unofficial celebration. Right after this morning/afternoon processional, once things have sort of dissipated from the event of the processional and the women

of Boa Morte, the sisters of Boa Morte, the *samba* starts – the *samba de roda*. And so, dancing, music, many, many tourists are there. The people that have been walking for the last three days or people that have been- just showed up today, people from the town all come to behind the headquarters in order to partake of this celebration.

And so, there is much happiness and elation. There are a lot of vendors whom are normally selling all sorts of food and beer and drink because now it just turns into a party. And so, once again, you hear different languages spoken around you. Someone around me was speaking Spanish and I was introduced to another PhD student from Salvador who happened to be there with her four friends and now I instantly had a group of friends I could dance with or near or sit down near and enjoy.

3.4.19 The Rest of Cachoeira and The Boa Morte Party

In other parts of town, there's the usual sort of flea market, that is, a place where you can, go and buy different, souvenirs or handmade goods or arts and crafts and clothes and things like that. And then also in another small square, an additional artisan area is impromptu set up for particular this day and the next day. The next two days are part of the unofficial party that occurs. And, again, people come and go, and they go back to wherever they're staying if they're staying at hotel or they go eat. This is a party that is, like, days long. And so, you very much, partake as little or as much as you want.

Definitely there is a main circle, which is the one- there are several little circles of parties, but there's one main circle where, people are going into the circle, they're dancing samba, they're calling someone else out. There's a communal aspect. There's a public element to this party and there's also a welcoming. And so, when a tourist jumps out who is very clearly not from Bahia and is dancing samba and, they're not doing that well but they're trying, the entire crowd erupts with a type of encouragement that, someone from far away is there and partaking and attempting to partake fully. There is eating, there is drinking. You sort of, like, sit on this side of a street bench or a step and just sort of take it in or take a breather or take a moment. And different small circles of musicians whom were also there as tourist participants and/or residents, it's a party day and so they brought their instruments out and so there are little circles of just, groups that are playing different samba, different rhythms and different Afro-Brazilian music.

Stories on stage, as well as in other presentations and performance, transfer knowledge in acts of transfer. I argue, through the identification of the emancipatory possible, that the story

being transferred is more comprehensive than has been identified in historical and sociological studies to date. Performance is world making and therefore the possibility exists, within limits, for small wiggle room to be created in an interchange between marginalized people. Even if that interchange occurs in tourism scenarios ensconced in simplified or essentialized notions, generative outcomes are possible that will take shape differently for each audience member or roots tourist. It is precisely the unguaranteed outcome that performance allows for, which creates the opportunity that I call the emancipatory possible.

*In addition to the music, there are also dance groups that get up and perform. There's just a series of dance after dance after dance and musical performing and bands. And so, I would say every, probably, thirty minutes to an hour there's a change of, in this public festival there's a change of who is performing. In addition to all that is being said, you also get a little bit of introduction and one of the leaders, again, a gentleman named, Valmir, who is a leader in the community and very associated with Boa Morte and helping and volunteering and working, again, **makes a comment that this is the real Bahia, and this is the real Brazil and not, an over commercialized Olympics or beach on Rio de Janeiro. This is the homegrown.***

This is the authentic and original and African place and moment. And that this is the common person's festival. This is everyone's festival. It's a public festival that everyone is welcome at and celebrates these women. And so, the sisterhood is continuously mentioned as the reason why they're all there. The performers, the music, the party, the dancing, the tourists constantly is mentioned that the organization and specifically the women of that organization are the center of attention.

I argue that this is the primary difference between roots tourists and other tourists. Roots tourists are usually Afro-descendant people. As Afro-descendant people, it stands to reason that they go there to compare the trajectory of African cultural assimilation, survival, repression, and celebration in Bahia/Brazil, alongside that of their own country. The fixed-ness of that celebratory African-ness is less likely to draw roots tourists, than the fluidity and changes of cultural over time. While many may ascribe the celebratory African-ness of Bahia to either Black political movements or the resounding resilience of Afro-Brazilians, while downplaying the overt influence of

governmental promotion of Bahia's African authenticity, roots tourists are not wrong about Bahia's uniqueness in the hemisphere. They may be wrong about the "why" and "how," but the roots tourists are not wrong about the "what."

An exciting moment during the party, which happens a few times, once in the afternoon and a little bit later in the evening, not all of them, but **a couple of the sisters come out and you get to see them be a part of the circle and the center of the circle.** And, these older, sometime shorter women dancing this Bahian *samba* and, enjoying and partaking and so this was a very exciting moment. It's a culmination moment because you've seen them go from very solemn on the evening that they are commemorating their past, the women who have been part of the organization who have now passed, to later when they are in a public wake for Our Lady of Good Death, of Mary and her passing, to then the happiness of the ascension of Mary and her going to Heaven and the party afterwards. And so, you've seen and been with them, if you've been there for the entire festival, and now you see them somewhat transforming into their regular self and not their ritual or festival self. And so, it's a little bit more of them just, enjoying themselves and dancing when they want and that's it. And so, there's a couple of moments where it's just them dancing and the entire crowd is just watching them and clapping for them and being happy for them.

The crowd is especially happy when the interactions are lively and so there might be two sisters that are dancing with each other or attempting to one up each other on a dance step or there might be a sister that was reluctant to dance, but her fellow sisters brought her out and once she got brought out, she turned it on and was a movement- a flurry of movement and of samba and energy, which again, was reluctant but is showing much, hip-work, footwork and happiness and energy.

3.4.20 Note of comparison – the Olympics

Bahia is often compared to other Brazilian cities, especially southern ones, such as Rio de Janeiro. During my participation in the 2016 *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), Rio

was mentioned several times by many local residents of Cachoeira and tourists that came to the *Boa Morte* festival. In August of 2016, Rio de Janeiro was hosting the summer Olympic games.

The Olympics are the perfect example of this comparison, between Bahia and the rest of Brazil, as they were mentioned by Valmir during the secular party that followed the festival-proper. I mentioned Valmir previously as a prominent member of the local community and as someone associated with sisterhood. At the secular party, especially after a particularly exciting moment of *samba-de roda*, Valmir said several times over the microphone that *Boa Morte* (the sisters, the festival, and even us [as guests]) were more real and authentic than anything happening in Rio. He said the real Brazil and what really mattered was in the middle of the circle in this dancing our enjoyment together as we celebrated the sisters. He said he wouldn't trade his festival experience for anything happening in Rio.

*During this period of August in Brazil, the Olympics were also going on. And so, some of the people that you'd meet on the street would mention the fact that they'd **rather be here**. They'd rather be at the event and participating and watching and, being a part of this Afro-Bahian event as opposed to some large-scale, **not real event** that is **inaccessible to the regular** person because it costs so much for a ticket or to be able to watch some of their own sports figures participate in the Olympics. That, you know, they would rather be at this free and public event because of its **authenticity and meaning**.*

Rebeca Lerer for *Amnesty International*, reported in July 2016 that Brazil was “on course for Olympic Games to follow the model set by Rio’s past sports mega-events – the global limelight will focus on the glitz and glory while, mere kilometers away, an alarming number of Black youth from favelas will continue to pay with their own lives for this collective failure.”²⁶⁰ She also reported that Rio de Janeiro’s state authorities had been, “shockingly silent about the appalling levels of killings by police.” The feeling expressed in Cachoeira about the “inauthenticity” of Rio, could have something to do with the 2500+ deaths by hands of the police between 2009 (when the

²⁶⁰ Rebeca Lerer. 4 July 2016. “Rio 2016: Has Brazil lost even before the Olympics have begun?” *Amnesty International*. Accessed 04 March 2018.

Rio won the bid to host the Olympics) and the summer of 2016. In Rio's favelas, over policing and military operations negatively impacted poor communities near access routes to and from the airport and competition arenas. Bruce Douglas reported in *The Guardian* newspaper, that housing advocacy groups accused local government of using the Olympics to justify forced evictions and racial segregation in Rio.²⁶¹ For *The Root*, and online magazine, Daniela Gomes wrote that in the years that preceded the Olympic games of 2016, Rio swept the city's poverty under the rug by increasing police and army presence in favelas.²⁶² Cases were reported of increased racial profiling of Black youths, with many being denied access to wealthier neighborhoods near beach areas. Poor Black youths were often removed from public transportation and the police would demand to see their documents for identification. Given the tension between poor and police, in 2015 deaths related to over policing included 480 Black men. Gomes, spoke with a mother of a favela man who was gunned down, and as a result maimed and paralyzed after an encounter with police; The mother said, 'Olympics for whom?...These games are made with the blood of our sons.'²⁶³ Gomes explained that for many Black residents, Brazil's Olympic legacy is just violence and exclusion.

I suggest that the comments of Valmir, while not specifically referencing these horrific acts, were an allusion to the marginalization of Afro-Brazilians. The Olympics was merely a very high profile international event that made visible the violence and brutalization of Black Brazilians. Thus, participation in the festival in rural Bahia, for those that commented on ticket prices, inaccessibility, and inauthenticity of the Olympics in Rio, was just as much about rebuking

²⁶¹ Bruce Douglas. 28 October 2015. "Brazil officials evict families from homes ahead of 2016 Olympic Games. *The Guardian*. Accessed 04 March 2018.

²⁶² Daniela Gomes. 03 August 2016. "Brutal Crackdowns, Hidden Poverty: How preparations for the Rio Olympics Hurt Afro-Brazilians." *The Root*. Accessed 04 March 2018.

²⁶³ Ibid.

the economic inequality of the event as it was about rebuking Black people's mistreatment in Brazilian society.

3.5 CONCLUSION FOR THE *BOA MORTE* CASE STUDY

Stephen Selka writes about skepticism he has encountered in his own work, as related to race in Bahia and also *Boa Morte*. Selka makes that skepticism intelligible when he explains,

[Scholar of] construction of race in Brazil Livio Sansone, admits that he is 'more skeptical than ever about any **intrinsic liberating and emancipating possibility** [my emphasis] in political mobilization around ethnic identity and race.' As I have indicated in my discussion of *Boa Morte*, I am just as skeptical about the notion that there is any inherent connection between hybridity or syncretism and racial equality or social justice. This is not to argue, of course, that oppositional identities are inherently liberating...[M]any Afro-Brazilians, including the sisters of *Boa Morte*, see no contradiction in affirming their African heritage through the celebration of a medieval Catholic festival...Thus, I suggest that it is more worthwhile to explore how discourses of mixture and opposition are used in practice than to argue that one or the other is inherently oppressive or liberating... As anthropologists concerned with everyday practice, we must attend to the fact that many identities remain outside of the political frame for those who live them.²⁶⁴

Livio Sansone is Vice Director of the Centro de Estudos Afro-Asiaticos (Center for the Study of Afro-Asians) at the Universidade Candido Mendes in Brazil. It is the largest research center on race in Brazil. In the passage above, Selka is adding his own skepticism about notions of inherent connections between hybridity, syncretism and social justice to those of Sansone. The hybridity and syncretism being mentioned here refers to instances where the Afro-Brazilian religion of *Candomblé* and Christianity influence each other's practices (i.e., duality of qualities, in certain instances, between Saints and *Orixas*). Selka references the sisterhood of *Boa Morte* as an example of what is colloquially referred to as a mixing of *Candomblé* and Catholicism. Sansone, asserts that it is unlikely that there is, "intrinsically liberating and emancipating possibilities in political

²⁶⁴ Stephen Selka. 2008. "The Sisterhood of *Boa Morte* in Brazil: Harmonious mixture, Black Resistance, and the Politics of Religious Practice." *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*. Vol 13. No 1. 101-102.

mobilization around identity and race.”²⁶⁵ Selka tempers this sentiment with his closing statement of the excerpt by stating, “with everyday practice, we must attend to the fact that many identities remain outside of the political frame for those who live them.”²⁶⁶ I argue that the skepticism of Sansone and Selka support my construction of the emancipatory possible within Brazilian roots tourism.

Sansone’s skepticism is related to his doubt about a political mobilization and any liberating or emancipating effects. This is because he is not taking into account wiggle room or performance. When roots tourists and tourism hosts encounter each other in performance at a heritage event, they are affirming Selka’s belief of “the fact that many identities remain outside of the political frame for those who live them.” Brazilian roots tourists are not participating because they believe that such participation in an event such as *Boa Morte* will magically transport them to Sansone’s (fictionally) “intrinsically liberating and emancipating possibilities.” Brazilian roots tourists know they are marginalized individuals engaging with other marginalized individuals. They recognize the fact that tourism events of heritage performance are a way for Black people in Bahia to openly celebrate their heritage within a context of oppression and political powerlessness. Any intrinsic or inherent liberating possibilities are inside of the individuals that partake of these events not in the actual political mobilization.

Further evidence of this are the oppositional identities that do not trouble the sisters of *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death). The seeming contradiction of affirming “African heritage through the celebration of a medieval Catholic festival,” is only problematic for those engaging in criticism and theory working *inside* “of the political frame.” For those *outside*

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

of the political frame such contradictions are an ever-present part of their everyday life. Oppositional identities within seemingly contradictory practices, such as affirming Africa through Catholicism, are one of the only ways to slowly affect change towards “racial equality or social justice.” In real life, using the lower frequencies (of music, dance, song, etc.), marginalized people in the Americas employ performance to incrementally approach racial equality mostly inside themselves: how they imagine themselves and how they perform the world they wish to be a part of outside of themselves. In doing so, through performance, they are creating worlds.

In this case study the world created –one where the imagined world and real-world meet— is a rare instance where Black women, for three days in August, are at the center of entire town/region’s attention and imagination. In this world, constructed through the practice of religious heritage performance, individuals literally are called (compelled to arrive) from around the world in order to *be* and to *bear witness*. In doing so they become part of the compelling story of these Afro-Brazilian women. When they become part of that story, Brazilian roots tourists, members of the African Diaspora (as trans(post)colonial subjects), engage in an interchange that is not inside of the political frame alluded to Selka. Both groups of marginalized people, Brazilian roots tourists and their hosts, can never escape that political frame due to their subjectivity. Yet, what they can do, is engage in practices that are seemingly contradictory while exposing seemingly oppositional identities. In doing so, this is where my emancipatory possible idea exists. The contradictory and oppositional create opportunity within the rift of the “seemingly.” In the confusion of the non-marginalized (because of the contradictions), the marginalized are using the lower registers of real life to effect smaller foci of reform in the wiggle room that performance create for them.

The seemingly contradictory and oppositional practices and identities of Afro Brazilians, such as the sisters of *Boa Morte*, do continue to promote to some essentializing notions of African-ness in Bahia. Selka explains that,

In Bahia, for example, the reification of oppositional Afro-Brazilian identities is problematic for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that essentialist representations of Afro-Brazilian culture do injustice to the diversity and complexity of everyday cultural practice. Yet it is important to recognize that hybrid and oppositional identities are not mutually exclusive in Brazil. They coexist simultaneously in the same sites of practice and within the same subjects....Afro-Brazilians use several registers of discourse about color and race in everyday practice.²⁶⁷

When “essentialist representations” of Bahia “do injustice,” it is because those representations are reaffirming the mythology of Mama Africa. The “reification of oppositional Afro-Brazilian identities,” therefore, obscures and flattens “the diversity and complexity of everyday cultural practice.” This cannot be negated. In fact, it forms the foundation of my ideas for the emancipatory possible. My *emancipatory possible* is not the “emancipating possibility” referenced above by Sansone (through Selka). The emancipatory possible of my work in Brazilian root tourism performance, “recognize[s] that hybrid and oppositional identities are not mutually exclusive in Brazil[,] [t]hey coexist simultaneously in the same sites of practice and within the same subjects.” One of the “several registers of discourse about color and race” in the Americas is that of roots tourism performance. The injustice to complexity and diversity of everyday cultural practice of Afro-Bahians is a given, and forms the foundation and backdrop for exploring the emancipatory possible within Brazilian roots tourism performance, such as the workshop day examined in chapter two, and *Boa Morte* examined in chapter three.

In an attempt to access the lower frequencies that Brazilian roots tourism is working in (and with), I asked Willard Taylor of YourWorld Travel: 1) why does YourWorld Travel engages

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

in this type African heritage travel to Brazil; and, 2) the individuals that go on these trips... why do they choose go?" He explained,

Their [African diaspora tourists] interests are the same as mine primarily. And I'm saying "mine" I mean, YourWorld [Travel]. They're interested in learning about themselves. They're interested in making connections with their culture. And they're interested in developing those kinds of networks. Many of our people that go, they have been going with us for years. [One group] out of Seattle, Washington. They're all educators. They have a program that- and it's an organization. They have a program in Kenya. But, they also go to Brazil with us every two years. We have another group that was very connected to the Boa Morte Sisterhood. And they go back to support Boa Morte. And we support Boa Morte as well.²⁶⁸

Mr. Taylor's answer makes clear that the Afro-diasporic tourists (mainly US-African-Americans) that he creates African heritage travel packages for, have interests that are aligned with his own, speaking for himself as an individual and on behalf of his travel agency. These tourists are interested "in learning about themselves" and "making connections with their culture," implying either an uncritical stance or attempt at reaching for the emancipatory possible. An uncritical surface-level engagement with Afro-Brazilian culture and people would be the perpetuation of the Mama Africa mythology. Such a trip would teach a tourist about herself solely by virtue of having gotten on a plane and heading south. It would also mean an attempt to connect to the idea of an essential African identity by virtue of merely *meeting* Black people in South America (and nothing more). The emancipatory possible stands in resolute difference to this kind of surface-level engagement. Emancipatory possibility is only possible if the tourist engages with and takes advantage of the opportunities for experience(s) provided by the three elements that create the wiggle room: "before, during, after"; porousness of the event; and bodily-kinesthetic participation.

In this case study, I was able to see the changes that the town made as the preparations began for the festival and the cleanup afterwards. This is the "before, during, after" aspect. It does not mean that a roots tourist has to live in Cachoeira for a month to access this aspect. It only

²⁶⁸ Personal Interview. 25 October 2017.

means that if they want to increase the emancipatory possible of their experience they need to be present for more than just a couple of hours. Coming in on a bus from Salvador, seeing the procession from the comfort of coffee shop or restaurant, and then getting back on the bus, is not going to yield much emancipatory possibility. Conversely, if the roots tourist is present for the entire event, meaning the festival-proper, in addition to some of the preparation before and some of the cleaning up after, this will highlight the staged authenticity. The festival then becomes less of a tourist anomaly to be gawked at and checked off a list. It becomes a respected ritual that the tourist has been invited to by the hosts. As a member of the public, seeing the sisters coming to town in preparation for the public rituals, knowing that they are engaging in private rituals to which tourists are not able to access, speaking with them when they are taking a break and sitting on the steps behind headquarters, seeing the sisters finish what they consider to be their yearly duty as per their membership in *Boa Morte*; this all forms part of recognizing the authenticity of this event and how it is staged. The backstage and behind the scenes aspects of the “before, during, after” show tourists a more complete story, that they can then choose to be a part of.

As they are being a part of the story of the event, the ability to enter as deeply or as shallow as desired is the second aspect. This public festival was porous. Tourists are able to come and go, and they can take breaks whenever they want. By participating in more of the event by attempting to engage as deeply as possible (within the limits of respectful engagement), the roots tourist is able to take advantage of this porous aspect. The porousness of the event itself does not guarantee anything. The emancipatory possible in relation to porousness is the agency of individual roots tourists. That is to say, just because the event allows for participation doesn’t mean everyone will engage, or if they choose to engage, that they will engage deeply. It is only through use of agency

as evidenced by the fullest participation possible, that the porousness of the event is activated toward the emancipatory.

Full engagement can mean different things to different tourists. The type of full engagement that I am espousing, as a result of this case study and the fieldwork involved, is that of the bodily-kinesthetic. By participating fully with your body and *moving with* the hosts of the roots tourism event, roots tourists can begin to investigate. Investigate what? Themselves. In the quote above, Mr. Taylor told us that these tourists are interested “in learning about themselves” and “making connections with their culture.” Afro-diasporic people that engage with the three aspects I have identified as integral to the emancipatory possible, are actively learning about themselves *through doing*. Performance then becomes a vehicle for them to answer some of the questions that arise as a result of this attempt to know themselves better.

Similarly, if “making connections with their culture,” means assuming that all Black people are the same, and thus automatically connected to each other, then no emancipatory anything will come of such an uncritical engagement. It is only through framing of the event by investigating some of the history surrounding it (personal reading and research), or by asking questions and engaging with local residents (if you have the language skills), or by having the event framed for you by a guide (such as when you are on a tour organized by a company such as YourWorld Travel), can emancipatory possible begin to become a part of a roots tourism encounter. Only when “making connections with their culture” means understanding that there are differences between the Afro-Brazilian and US-African-American experience, just as there are similarities. In making “connections,” the connections are between two diasporic communities of Afro-descendant people that find solidarity as trans(post)colonial subjects. The marginalization of both communities needs to be acknowledged as being complex and diverse, and the culture being

connected needs to not be a magical idea of Africa that is authentic because it is folkloric. If the culture being connected to is static in this way it becomes what Selka referred to in the previous excerpt as, “the reification of oppositional Afro-Brazilian identities.” It becomes the uncritical engagement with the mythology of Mama Africa, making Bahia out to be the kind of living museum where US-African-Americans (unsuccessfully) attempt to exchange their modernity for local traditions. In stark relief against this kind of connection making, stands the emancipatory possible. The “making connections with their culture,” through performance and the wiggle room it affords, becomes a search that is active and engaged to find that which racial trauma due to the middle passage has disconnected. The connections being made to Africa, are not through essentializing Black-ness or African-ness, but through networks and networking. Mr. Taylor said that his clients are, “interested in developing those kinds of networks.” The kinds of networks he means are those between Afro-diasporic subjects that wish to reconnect with like-minded fellow Black people. Not because they are the *exact same inside*, but because they are similar enough to be able to help each other make small changes in how they feel about themselves and how they are in the world.

An example of this empowerment through connection is the recounting of one specific moment during the 2012 *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death) attended by Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates. She explains that *Boa Morte* for her,

Was extremely celebratory. Then I got caught, like, the drumming and the singing and the parading really sort of takes you into a trance-like state when you’re in it. I was clearly- these women who, by the way, paraded on these cobblestone streets in high heels, like, completely dressed up. And I found that, I mean, I couldn’t have done what they did. Because- and I mean, they- and we marched for miles and miles. Like, literally I felt like I was in a parade for three hours. And, you know, so- and how the people just adored them. You know, they adored them and these women- to be around that much feminine energy in that way was also extremely empowering. You know, I don’t think I had until this past year and last fall experienced that with women until I went to the Women’s March on Washington.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ Personal Interview. 01 December 2017.

Pettiford-Wates was empowered by the feminine energy she felt and how much the public adored the sisters of *Boa Morte*. The connection she felt to the event came after experiencing “a trance-like state” as a result of getting caught in “the drumming and the singing and the parading.” Additionally, she reported that, “we [her, the sisters, and the other tourists] marched for miles and miles. Like, literally I felt like I was in a parade for three hours.” Pettiford-Wates feeling of extreme empowerment came as a result of connections being made from full participation in the performance of this ritual and her own performance as a part of the “we” during the marching “for miles and miles.” The African-ness of the event came to her as a result of the adoration for the sisters, which she identifies as “them” and “these women.” Without knowing the context, this could lead an outside observer to believe this means that simply because the sisters of *Boa Morte* are women, did Pettiford-Wates feel this way. Such an interpretation ignores the scenario that this roots tourist finds herself in. The comment of, “they adored them and these women,” refers to the town, the people in the crowd, the news cameras, the international travelers, the roots tourists, the country of Brazil...all of that wrapped in that one comment. As a US-African-American woman, Pettiford-Wates was connecting with the specific aspect of the tourism event centered on Afro-diasporic femininity and drew a connection between that feeling and the feeling of being at the 2017 Women’s March on Washington, a protest that was simultaneously against the sitting president and advocating for Women’s rights internationally. The example I gave of Pettiford-Wates earlier in chapter one relating to her work and her networking with South Africa, in addition to this anecdote are her emancipatory possible as a result of engaging in the roots tourism performance of Brazil’s *Boa Morte*.

4.0 *CAPÍTULO QUATRO* (CHAPTER FOUR)

4.1 A CONVERSATION ABOUT: DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY, PARTICIPATORY HERITAGE AND DIGITAL STORYTELLING

4.1.1 The Argument

In this chapter I argue that digital ethnography provides foundational guidelines for the creation of participatory heritage that heavily emphasizes digital storytelling. Digital ethnography is the representation of real-world cultures in digital media.²⁷⁰ Participatory heritage is the preservation of cultural heritage knowledge in digital spaces, usually in groups with mixed expertise levels operating under the premise of shared authority.²⁷¹ Digital storytelling encompasses a wide variety of media that use technology and story for personal expression.²⁷² The stories that this process ethically records and sustainably transmits could serve to increase the emancipatory possible of any given tourism event, especially roots tourism.

Digital Ethnography, participatory heritage and digital storytelling are *not* an absolutely necessary part of the emancipatory possible. Given that the emancipatory possible is related to tourism encounters and performance, there is a *live* aspect that cannot be replaced. Being in Bahia, in person, and seeing Afro-descendant art forms (i.e., *samba-de-roda* and *capoeira*) are a critical part of both of my case studies. I have argued in previous chapters that the emancipatory possible

²⁷⁰ Underberg, Natalie M., and Elayne Zorn. 2013. *Digital ethnography: Anthropology, narrative, and new media*. Austin: University of Texas Press. 11.

²⁷¹ Henriette Roued-Cunliffe and Andrea Copeland, eds. *Participatory Heritage*. London: Facet, 2017. xv.

²⁷² Megan Alrutz. *Digital Storytelling, Applied Theatre & Youth*. (London: Routledge, 2015). 5.

is located in a spectrum of staged authenticity within performances for and by roots tourists. That being the case, since the emancipatory possible is part of a spectrum, then it can be increased or reduced based on what tourists or hosts do.

My argument is related to my advocacy stance. I hope to develop in this chapter one way in which to increase the emancipatory possible. This particular approach is not limited to individual tourists and I hope organizations can benefit as well. In the combination of digital ethnography, participatory heritage, and digital storytelling, I see great possibilities for the communication of personal stories in an online space/digital space that are related to the meaning of heritage across constituencies. By diversifying the stories being told and shared, the story of any given event can be complicated and infused with the real-world issues facing both hosts and guests. What does this do? It counters essentializing notions by capturing the complexity of the human beings that engage in intangible cultural heritage and the performances associated with them. My idea is to use the digital to tell a more complete story, to increase the utopian and emancipatory generative effects of being involved with heritage (from either side: host or guest).

First, I will review what digital ethnography, participatory heritage, and digital storytelling are by reviewing some of the scholarship and ideas that correspond with my argument. Second, I will identify which elements of the three fields of study --digital ethnography, participatory and digital storytelling-- match up most effectively with the emancipatory possible. Third, I will ask questions about the digital and ethics through the work of Soyini Madison.

4.1.2 Digital Ethnography

Digital Ethnography focuses on the relation of digital media to cultural anthropology. The main question for scholars engaged in digital ethnography is: what is the role of the ethnographer

in relation to digital self-representation (such as websites, blogs, social media)? Natalie Underberg and Elayne Zorn suggest that anthropologists should be translators of culture and not critics of it. Their book *Digital Ethnography* explains that this distinction is essential (to them) and that culture needs to be translated by those with the ability to be considered “cultural experts.”²⁷³ Underberg and Zorn’s *Digital Ethnography* asserts that translating between two groups (technical producers and cultural producers) is the role that cultural anthropologists (and anthropologists within other subfields) are best situated to play, in terms of training and interest, on teams of digital cultural production.²⁷⁴ This is what they mean when using the term “cultural experts.” As experts on the study of human culture, anthropologists could serve as translators between producers of culture (on the ground, real world, people engaged in culture) and technical producers of digital media and spaces.

Underberg and Zorn’s digital ethnography work is not quite as radical as the work of Denzin or Madison. Politically speaking, Denzin and Madison are ideologically opposed because *Digital Ethnography* espouses a non-critical stance. As simply translators and cultural experts, ethnographers of the digital are supposed to allow for communication between members and non-members of social groups. That’s it, facilitate communication not only between the creative team of digital media and spaces, but also between culture producer groups (hosts) and non-members (guests).

Yet, even in the description of what a digital ethnographer is supposed to do, responsibility is mentioned in representing a juxtaposition of multiple voices in the immersive digital experience. Underberg and Zorn’s ethnographic methodology engages in a kind of softer radical stance. Digital

²⁷³ Underberg and Zorn. 2013. 8-9.

²⁷⁴ For this conversation, “technical producers” are technologically proficient creators of digital media and digital platforms; they might be: film directors, video editors, video game designers, webmasters, app coders, etc. “Cultural producers” are artists and heritage presenters that engage in the creation of cultural heritage events; in the case of tourism: it would be the host or presenting group of any intangible cultural heritage activity or performance.

ethnography as explained in *Digital Ethnography* forefronts collaboration in the making of the digital experience (production) and also cultural sensitivity in gathering of the data (fieldwork). Additionally, digital ethnographers are supposed to include cultural elements (from their mastery in communication of culture) in the how the experience unfolds for the consumers (and the content they interact with) during the delivery of the cultural content.

Digital ethnography involves digital design and interactivity. The role of the digital ethnographer is to help communicate info to non-members about a field site as translators and cultural experts. Underberg & Zorn advocate that communication must be accomplished by understanding the field site (and the presentation mode), and then attempting communication between different groups to accomplish culturally responsible aims. Ethnographers on a digital media project also transform the very process of its creation, through an emphasis on collaborative partnerships.

Underberg & Zorn report that digital ethnographers also think greatly on how to integrate key cultural ideas into the design of the interface. Digital ethnographers consider explanatory and experimental ways to represent cultural ideas (content) through an interface that reflects the ideas being presented. For Underberg & Zorn, digital ethnography is a method for representing real-life cultures through combining the characteristic features of digital media with story. The goal is to maximize the expressive and procedural potential of computer-based storytelling to go beyond absorption of facts and move towards “experiencing” of culture (digitally). Procedural potential when it comes to digital media refers to the interface, how the spectator-visitor-participant interacts at the point of contact.

Digital Ethnography explains that digital media and therefore digital ethnographers consider interactivity and immersion as a way to tell cultural stories that “recreate aspects of

ethnographic methods for a diverse audience.”²⁷⁵ I liken this to the application of responsible field research methods integrated into a delivery system for the content. It should be noted that the audience’s “diversity” in these anthropological conversations (as related to the digital) has more to do with their ignorance (as non-members of the culture being represented in digital spaces) than diversity of ethnicities. *Digital Ethnography* promotes that ethnography is both the process and product. Underberg & Zorn feel that culture is as much about feeling created through sensory experiences, as it is about documentation/presentation (of ways others go about their thinking/being).

Juxtaposing multiple voices can create dialogic spaces in digital environments; this must be done with two aspects in mind: 1) digital spaces have their own culture, and 2) digital environments effect real world adaptation and influence of use. It is in the latter aspect that I see correlation to performance as related to digital ethnography and digital storytelling. Digital ethnography therefore becomes an underutilized component of tourism encounters that can aid the emancipatory possible. By telling stories that complicate or add (through diversity) to the simplified narratives related to the staged authenticity of tourism encounters, digital ethnography can be both an extension of and critical component that promotes positive outcomes for all parties involved in tourism. The diversity I am espousing is not the same as the “diversity” mentioned in anthropological conversations above. My invocation of the term diversity is a social justice initiative to find voices within groups that highlight marginalized people. The purpose of this is to let a seemingly monolithic group, such as African descendant trans(post)colonial subjects, express their diversity (individual differences) based on ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and the myriad of other identification factors that make up a person’s identity in the twenty-first

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 10

century. The most important part of that expression of diversity (mine, not Underberg and Zorn's) would be the telling of their own stories in their own words. By seeking content that highlights the diversity of people involved in cultural heritage performance and translating that diversity to the digital, the story being told is thus more inclusive and counters tourism marketing's essentializing notions.

In my argument for this chapter, that digital ethnography provides foundational guidelines for the creation of participatory heritage that heavily emphasizes digital storytelling. Digital ethnography is the methodology by which content is acquired (fieldwork) and communicated (curated and presented) in order to create digital spaces that allow for participatory heritage and storytelling to reach the public. In this case, when it comes to digital ethnography, the spaces being created are literal digital spaces (even though most are intangible because they exist inside interconnected networks of computers commonly referred to as the "internet," or the "cloud"). These spaces are the places where the user will interface with the content: websites, blogs, podcasts, video games, interactive museum exhibits, etc. This differs from the "space" that will be references in my next section. Space in participatory heritage is more along the lines of metaphorical space, where the rules are different that in traditional cultural institutions.

4.1.3 Participatory Heritage and Digital Storytelling

According to Henriette Roued-Cunliffe and Andrea Copeland, participatory heritage is a space.²⁷⁶ In this space, knowledge is shared and co-created. Individuals outside of formal institutions participate in cultural activities deemed to be heritage. Although individuals or groups

²⁷⁶ Henriette Roued-Cunliffe and Andrea Copeland, eds. *Participatory Heritage*. xv-xvi.

engage with heritage they are not necessarily affiliated with official institutions which may be limited by policies and procedures or budgetary constraints. Participatory heritage collaboration groups care very little for specific mediums of communication or validated professional expertise. These groups acknowledge that there is a diversity of expertise and the promise is that they will operate under an umbrella of shared authority. The individuals drawn to participatory heritage engage as a result of a strong desire to gain share or create knowledge that is new. Digital conductivity as well as facility and ease of content creation makes participation by greater numbers of people possible. Those people include family historians, craftspeople, artisans, and even informal groups dedicated to memory making outside of recognized formal heritage institutions. Roued-Cunliffe and Copeland argue that there exists much in common and therefore a possible meeting ground for participatory heritage groups and heritage institutions.

Examples of participatory heritage include Wikipedia, the Sydney Opera House Flickr group, Ravelry, and Ancestry.²⁷⁷ Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia whose content is generated through crowd sourcing, the enlisting of large number of people, either paid or unpaid, typically via the Internet, to obtain information or complete a task. The Sydney Opera House Flickr group is an online depository for images related to the Sydney Opera House in Australia, a committee reviews all photos to be included. Ravelry is a social networking site that focuses on knitting, it boasts a global membership and the ability to share cultural experiences related to knitting worldwide. Ancestry is a subscription service focusing on genealogical research that is then combined with historical records and user generated content.

Roued-Cunliffe and Copeland explain that heritage institutions of a formal nature could not have created any of the examples above because the nimbleness required to respond to market-

²⁷⁷ Ibid., xvii-xviii.

driven technology trends is usually based on democratic and dynamic information environments. These scholars also identify that these groups are only beholden to themselves and not beholden to the public good in the way that heritage institutions are. The goal of Roued-Cunliffe and Copeland in *Participatory Heritage* is to break down the barrier between potential participants in heritage –both at institutions and in communities.

This is where participatory heritage as a practice leads to questions about digital storytelling. Given my argument (that digital ethnography provides foundational guidelines for the creation of participatory heritage that heavily emphasizes digital storytelling), participatory heritage enables agency and enterprise by those not necessarily deemed experts by larger cultural institutions. Participatory heritage groups rely heavily on a diversity of expertise, with great emphasis on local knowledge, without valuing traditional education above real-world-level intimate knowledge, of subject matter. Put simply: participatory heritage would allow informally educated people that are intimately familiar with a cultural event to create knowledge. This knowledge would be delivered through digital means and participatory heritage could spark the creation of entire sets of stories hitherto untold to become part of the larger story of that cultural event. Now, let's shift the conversation to the questions that should be asked of the stories to be included in this sort of participatory heritage.

In the explanation of digital ethnography above, the role of cultural stories lies at the center of that anthropological activity. The goal of digital ethnographic practices is the building of digital environments with multiple voices involved (and juxtaposed) in order to have users experience a more complete cultural immersion (and not just absorption of facts). As previously mentioned, Underberg and Zorn suggest that anthropologists should be translators of culture and not critics of it. I counter that approach by pointing out that any digital ethnographer that curates her virtual

environments (and the stories within them) in ethically responsible ways –keeping the Other in mind— is already a critic of culture and not a purely objective translator. Ethical curating of the stories that will be accessible to the public as part of digital space (platform) leads me to ask specific questions governing these critical curatorial choices.

The place where I see the intersection between these three fields (digital ethnography, participatory heritage, and digital storytelling) is the content. My relevant questions for digital ethnographers, technical producers, or in my case performance scholars are: Who creates it? Who curates? How do users interact with the digital environment? What do these users do with the information? What is the relationship of the user's identity to both the environment and content of this digital material? These are just some of the questions that come to my mind as I consider the possibilities for participatory heritage and digital storytelling and ethnography to become part of the before, during, and after of a roots tourism event and encounter.

As I move deeper into digital storytelling as the center of cultural immersion in the digital, I will touch briefly upon the importance of understanding inequalities related to infrastructure. Noah Lestra writes in “Social Inequalities in the Shaping of Cultural Heritage Infrastructure,” that when marginalized communities engage in partnerships with formal cultural heritage institutions often these partnerships are one sided in terms of power dynamics.²⁷⁸ Lenstra argues that marginalized communities should have much of autonomy over their own cultural heritage production. This should include deep community engagement as well as support of community leadership. It is never enough to merely provide marginalized communities with access to specific resources; models need to be created between stakeholders in order to develop cultural heritage

²⁷⁸ Noah Lestra. “Social Inequalities in the Shaping of Cultural Heritage Infrastructure.” In *Participatory Heritage*. 97-103.

infrastructure that is sustainable. The models Lenstra argues for are necessarily unique and different for each cultural group or institution of marginalized people. His findings conclude that the greatest possibility of success is attained through intensive community engagement and building relationships with leaders of marginalized communities in order to support those leaders in developing autonomous cultural heritage infrastructure.

What my exploration of digital ethnography and participatory heritage sets up is the idea that the content shared in digital environments is always contextually bound by how it was created, what ethical responsibilities were considered as far as the infrastructure, and who has control over the dissemination of the content after it has been created. All of these elements should be taken into consideration when attempting to increase the emancipatory possible. The story being told online should correspond with the values of the organization that is being referenced. Additionally, the infrastructure, i.e., the logistics, behind how digital content transitions from being archival material (tangible or intangible, in the real-world) into being a digital heritage final-product that is user-friendly, should be related to the mission and values of the organization as well as the people who are the subjects of the content created. Finally, upon reaching the stage where users can interact with these digital stories (related to the heritage), they should be curated with a high level of autonomy by the group or people represented in the stories.

Digital storytelling needs to be framed specifically by the questions raised by digital ethnographers and proponents of participatory heritage in order to be useful for the emancipatory possible. The reason is that digital storytelling is a field that is extremely expansive. Digital storytelling is a broad tool that can be used in theater, performance, and education, as well as a myriad of other areas of artistic and scholarly endeavors.

Digital storytelling scholar Joe Lambert is convinced that, in a world that is changing too rapidly and drowning in a myriad of technological options for lifestyle, workplace, and civic engagement, there's only one certainty.²⁷⁹ That certainty is the existence of a machine or appliance that is capable of sustaining an exhaustive record of our day-to-day experience. He calls this machine or appliance "the memory box."²⁸⁰ Lambert's memory box idea is a metaphor for the current and future technology that will become the repository for everyone's family and professional archives –a collection of images, videos, and other new-media that represents the experiences of our lives. I interpret Lambert's emphasis on the importance of the memory box idea as an endorsement of three areas that digital storytellers will need to master: digital literacy, conversational media, and improvisational identities. Lambert suggests because of technological innovations the memory box may change in appearance overtime, but its function will remain the same. If the memory box's function is to store experiences through different kinds of media, then digital literacy is the ability to maximize the potential of that media and the appliances that can access it. Conversational media is the idea the face-to-face communication remains the central means of exchange and media assists or amplifies it, not the other way around. The conversationality of media relates to how assets are organized inside the memory box, how they are labeled, and for what stories they are used. Improvisational identities correlates to the understanding that identities are fluid because they are based on many little stories that can be adjusted countless different ways. Thus, Lambert asserts that human beings have an undeniable need to explain their identities to each other constantly. Lambert's *Digital Storytelling* is an

²⁷⁹ Joe Lambert. *Digital Storytelling*. Berkley, CA: Digital Diner Press, 2006.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 15-17.

autobiographical manifesto combined with an introduction to the field and specific practices that involve new-media and storytelling.

Brian Alexander's *New Digital Storytelling* envisions the field as the modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling.²⁸¹ This modern expression includes image, text, audio, video, music, and other emerging technologies. Alexander explains that digital storytelling manifests itself through narrative creation processes with a personal video, social media, multimedia games, podcast, blogs, and many other forms of new media communication.²⁸² Alexander explains that in the simplest terms, digital storytelling is the telling of stories with digital technologies. Examples can include: a short story (made from photographs) about growing food, a podcast about medieval history, a blog novel, an account of an alien invasion as told through Twitter, a video clip of a relationship as it develops over time, a game that can extend across multiple platforms (based on a website, that moves to an app, and later includes even your email inbox), a novel read on a mobile phone (that was created on a mobile phone), and even a Holocaust victim's life retold on Facebook. All of these examples constitute what can be considered storytelling using new media, or digital storytelling. Digital stories can be fictional or nonfictional, deeply personal or completely superficial.²⁸³ Another aspect of digital storytelling is that this media can be delivered through single interface or across multiple platforms.

As you can see by the definitions and examples highlighted by Alexander, digital storytelling is an ever-expansive practice. Not all of these practices would be useful in roots tourism or in the attempt to increase the emancipatory possibilities of any given performance or

²⁸¹ Brian Alexander. *New Digital Storytelling: Creating Narratives with New Media*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praegar, 2011.

²⁸² Ibid., 1-15.

²⁸³ Ibid.

tourist encounter. The example of the Holocaust victim's life retold on Facebook does have overlap with the topics I am engaging in this dissertation. Stories are also at the center roots tourism. In my two Brazilian roots tourism performance case studies, it is the story (or stories) that surround any given encounter which make that encounter attractive for roots tourists. In the case of the young women on the workshop day (chapter two), the contextualizing lecture from the public intellectual was a series of small stories about the geography and people that the young girls were encountering. In a public speaking scenario, Gilberto Leal was expressing his own experiences and his own story combined with his historical knowledge of Black entities (activist organizations) and movements in Bahia. Politics came alive as this human being in front of the group explained the trials and tribulations faced by Black people in Brazil. During the *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death) the story of the town of Cachoeira as the birthplace of Brazil's independence as well as the origin story of the *Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of Good Death) are what gave the event a high level of staged authenticity.

It is the stories that invite roots tourists to Bahia and it is the stories that give the *blocos Afro* (and other sites on the map of African-ness) their relationship to local and foreign Afro-descendant people. The stories that are a part of Brazilian roots tourism performance would lend themselves to being adapted to digital methods of delivery (platforms). Not in an effort to replace live performance (i.e., tourist participation and host presentation), but rather in an effort to extend the moment of encounter by increasing the before and the after. I will address in more detail below when I point out ways to increase the emancipatory possible using the digital.

Media scholar Knut Lundby calls self-representational stories that utilize new media: “mediatized stories.”²⁸⁴ This specific kind of digital storytelling focuses on small scale storytelling by digital means. Mediatized stories are usually short, made with the off-the-shelf equipment, have an inexpensive production process, and center on the creator-narrator’s personal life and experiences. Lundby explains that there is a potential for small-scale sustainable media practice to be compellingly connected and democratic.²⁸⁵ He references the work of Lambert and other pioneers and alludes to the origins of digital storytelling as wanting to give marginalized groups a voice through the use of the democratic potential of new media. Because digital storytelling is a bottom-up activity and a user generated media practice, often production is performed by amateurs. Regular people, not experts or professionals, that have enough interest to develop the necessary competencies are able to tell their own stories using digital tools. Lundby focuses *Digital Storytelling, Mediatized Stories* on self-representational digital stories, personal stories told in the storyteller’s own voice. In a self-representational digital story, identity is always on display. Lundby notes that while it is often regarded as genuine or authentic this kind of digital storytelling does not involve authenticity as a given. When a storyteller plays one narrative they adjust identity accordingly. This is especially true when one person could have many stories to tell, about themselves and Others. Lundby also points out that in digital storytelling, especially the self-representational kind, the stories told are often mediated by tacit rules, social relations, and subtle framing of the platform or infrastructure delivering the media.

Lundby’s assertion that authenticity in self representational digital storytelling is not a given, pairs up quite nicely with the fact that all authenticity in tourism is staged. The storyteller

²⁸⁴ Knut Lundby. *Digital Storytelling, Mediatized Stories*: self-representations in New Media. New York: Peter Lang, 2008.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 1-15.

who chooses to tell different stories about herself depending on the audience is not being inauthentic. She is authentically playing out one of the narratives and adjusting her identity accordingly. Similarly, in roots tourism, and all tourism in general, authenticity exists on a spectrum. The staged authenticity that draws roots tourists is one specifically identifiable as true, because (similar to the storyteller in Lundby's explanation, who is not being inauthentic), the cultural heritage presenter(s) are authentically playing one narratives about themselves and adjusting their identity accordingly. Furthermore, the scenario itself must offer a true (perceived to be true by both hosts and guests) opportunity to engage with that individual or art form in such a way that is not meant for the consumption by non-roots tourist. That is to say, if the story being told by the art that is presented is essentialized or dumbed down, it will be of no interest to the roots tourist. US-African-American roots tourist travel to Brazil to engage with Africa (the idea of, the diaspora of, and themselves in: Africa). The various tourism events they encounter in performance are part of the global map of African-ness, precisely because of the perceivable authenticity associated with the entire scenario that ensconces the event.

As far as Lundby's assertion regarding tacit rules, social relations, and subtle framing, this too correlates between self-representational digital storytelling and Brazilian roots tourism performance. As any stage theater director can attest that the conventions of the world of each play are built, they are constructed. Similarly, the rules, relations, and framing of both small-scale digital storytelling of the self-representational kind and of roots tourism performance, are akin to the constructed conventions –the built world of the play (in relation to live theater). Yet it is not only the conventions which limit any given live performance it is also the physical space (actual stage area). The constructive nature of convention(s) creates rules, but so does the physical limitations of the space (actual). Digital storytelling is a space (metaphorical), that exists in digital

environments (platforms). Although these digital environments are at times more unbelievable and abstract than physical real-world environments, they are still bound by the rules, relations, and framing of the particular platform they use. An example of this would be the 140-character limit imposed on a self-representational digital storyteller that wishes to utilize Twitter to reach her audience.

Limitations to the storyteller in the digital come not only from the specific platform but also the conditions of where the stories originate. Margaret Ann Clarke in “Developing Digital Storytelling in Brazil” explains that Joe Lambert’s original vision for storytelling has been a spring board for the development of projects in social, educational, and activist communities (i.e., Radio and television storytelling projects in the US and UK [NPR, Moth, BBC, etc.], participatory public history in Australia, and participatory development narratives in southeast Asia).²⁸⁶ She acknowledges the importance of Lambert’s foundational influence, while also acknowledging that digital storytelling will need to adapt and transform as it traverses national boundaries and attempts to disseminate through programs for learning and social action within diverse (as in underrepresented groups’) communities of practice. Clarke explains that in Brazil, due to economic inequality, there is corresponding highly unequal access to computers and new media. This context specific view related to the Brazilian experiences of digital storytelling brings three questions to the forefront of Clarke’s scholarship. First, she asks, how can disparities in the availability of resources in Brazil as compared to North America be addressed? Second, how can training on the construction of stories be adapted to encourage cultural awareness in the capacity for independent action by young people? Third, how will stories created be disseminated in such

²⁸⁶ Margaret Ann Clarke. “Developing Digital Storytelling in Brazil.” In *Story Circle: Digital Storytelling Around the World*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. 144-154.

a way so us to remain sustainable? Clarke believes that the digital divide, which she explains as being the alienation of citizens from technologies of communication that increasingly influence their world, can be bridged (at least in part).

In my view, Clarke's third question is about wiggle room, and the small gains made possible through cultural agency. She sees the self-authoring of digital stories as a way to close the gap. The gap in her work is the digital divide. Some citizens have access to technology and others do not. In her first question she's pointing out hemispheric inequality between Brazil and countries in the global North. Digital storytelling, through sustainability of dissemination, then becomes a world making practice by bridging the digital divide, even if only slightly. The emancipatory possible is the use of performance in tourism scenarios in order to make small changes having generative effects in the lived experiences of marginalized people. Clarke's work uses world making in a different way to achieve a similar goal. The small gain she aims for is in the digital divide that exists for those without the means to access platforms of technology. In increasing slightly the access to media, through social justice related digital storytelling initiatives, she is offering marginalized individuals the opportunity to share their own stories in their own words on their own terms.

Another scholar that is using digital storytelling to empower youth is applied theatre practitioner and community engagement researcher Megan Altruz. In *Digital Storytelling, Applied Theatre, & Youth*, she asserts that digital storytelling can be an applied to theater practice.²⁸⁷ Digital storytelling becomes a site of possibility when it builds on the knowledge of self and society and invites dialogs with audiences. The three aspects of possibility that she is espousing as a result of combining digital storytelling and applied theatre are: engaging and valuing youth; creation of

²⁸⁷ Megan Altruz. *Digital Storytelling, Applied Theatre & Youth*.

new knowledge around self/ Society/ Others; and fostering dialogue and potential action around issues of identity, culture, and community. Altruz argues that at the intersection of these two fields, applied theater and digital storytelling, is a wellspring of untapped potential. She reports that digital storytelling as an applied theater practice is the intentional integration of the digital with live performance. It includes real-time embodied performance that is interactive along with mediated digital representations. For Altruz, digital storytelling in a theatrical context invites the reimagining of narratives by the young people participating.²⁸⁸ The reimagining of narratives is an exciting possibility that theater and performance provides the young people that work with Altruz. She is employing digital means of self-refashioning through telling a different narrative. This is an emancipatory and utopian practice.

Once again, here is an example of how performance is world making. In the Brazilian cases of the *Essence of a Goddess* trip and *Boa Morte*, the roots tourists get to perform themselves in this scenario that is different from their everyday life. Granted it does bear great resemblance to noncritical engagement by non-roots tourists interested only in encountering difference and not investigating the difference. Yet, the big difference is that Brazilian roots tourists are performing a version of themselves that have uncritical engagement as a possibility and are choosing to go in the opposite direction. The Brazilian roots tourists in my first case study, the young ladies from *Girls for a Change*, are practicing a different self by performing their roots tourist self. In this example the young women are not at this point (during the tourism encounter) telling a story about themselves (self reflexively). But they are involved in acting one out. The young women are acting out: who they wish to become by embodying and engaging with the arts and performance of the

²⁸⁸ The examples in her work come from creating digital storytelling media that were integrated with live theatre and presented in tandem. She cites examples from her previous work such as performance created with urban Black youth in the neighborhood of Parramore (Orlando, FL).

Other. They accomplish this by: recognizing their own privilege of access to transnational travel; by contextualizing that recognition and making a comparison between themselves and the Afro-Brazilians they encounter; and finally, by receiving any acts of transfer available to them through that engagement with performances. Because performance is world making, this world making can manifest itself in the retelling of stories through digital means by Brazilian youths, or through the physical engagement with Brazilian roots tourism performance by Afro-diasporic youths from the United States.

The *Boa Morte* festival allows for an engagement with a specific origin story. These Afro-diasporic older women tell reporters in interviews or talk to researchers and relate their organizations origin story; just as they do for any visitor that asks them about it. This may not be digital storytelling, but the power of that story and the relationship of the storyteller to the Afro-descendant tourist (when they're in the same space) is a reimagining of the sister's own narrative. The reimagined narrative is one of identity and power, of belief and prayer, towards the goal of Black solidarity, which contrasts mightily with the marginalized place that Brazilian Black women are subjected to. The relation of their origin story may not be digital storytelling in the current moment, but I assert, that it lends itself perfectly to be translated into the digital.

4.2 THE DIGITAL AND THE EMANCIPATORY POSSIBLE

The emancipatory possible is a potential byproduct of the engagement with performance by hosts and tourists in tourism scenarios. In roots tourism it comes about as a result of engagement with story. The identities of the hosts, or producers, of performance encounters in Bahia are a result of the stories they are able to share about both the joy of their art form and the simultaneous

marginalization of Black people. Therefore, the aspects that line up well between the emancipatory possible and digital ethnography and digital storytelling are: the practice of participatory heritage; the ethical questions raised by digital ethnographers; the ability for some stories to be self-representation in the digital; the recognition of the conditions that perpetuate unequal relationships based on hegemony (along with the corresponding realization that small gains are possible) as a counter response; and creation of new knowledge about self, Society, and Others.

4.2.1 The practice of participatory heritage

Participatory heritage is a digital space where knowledge is shared and co-created. In the doing of participatory heritage, individuals and groups engage with cultural activities and acknowledge the existence of a diversity of expertise. The people co-creating participatory heritage engage because of a strong desire to gain, share, and/or create knowledge about their heritage interests. The emancipatory possible comes about as a result of engagement. Participatory heritage creates avenues for further engagement in digital spaces. This activity of adding to knowledge creation, without needing the validation of formal cultural institutions of heritage, is an emancipatory practice in itself. In this sort of digital space, the diversity of expertise is valued in a way that it is not in the real world. As far as the emancipatory possible within encounters of Brazilian roots tourism performance, a digital space where there is an egalitarian ethos that governs knowledge exchange would allow for different ways of being and knowing to be recognized more readily.

In such a space, the knowledge shared by an enthusiast, who may not necessarily be a professional heritage curator or even formally educated, yet has an extensive institutional memory due to participation, would be invaluable. Participatory heritage would also allow for the

cataloging of experiences or information received second hand from expert sources. That is to say, an enthusiast (tourist or host) may have information they received through oral history or personal investigation. Participatory heritage as a shared knowledge space would allow that individual to relate information they received secondhand which may not be available anywhere else, allowing other participants in the space to grow from often are private archives that either live inside of a person's head or in their personal effects (often left undiscovered). There is emancipatory possibility for tourism producers within instances of participatory heritage. A digital space that allows for the co-creation of knowledge surrounding the event could give individuals usually relegated to the background or backstage of a tourism event a chance to express what is that they do. Simply put: not everyone in the *Boa Morte* organization is one of the sisters; what do the Others associated with the organization have to say about the festival? Before an encountering an event, the roots tourist could access this digital space and find themselves in a pre-encounter that is much more nuanced than a tourism board's promotional material. In this pre-encounter, the roots tourist might decide to curate their own involvement and experience, if they find that a previous roots tourist really extracted something valuable from one particular part of the tourism event or encounter.

Since the emancipatory possible is very connected to the idea of staged authenticity, participatory heritage could allow for more of the latter. Instead of consuming what state sponsored tourism companies or regional tourism industries want you to think of a particular event, the roots tourist could have access to a participatory heritage space where they receive a crowd sourced account of meaning. In an ideal scenario this crowd sourced account of meaning would entice the roots tourist to compare their own experiences and meaning making to that of Other. Such

comparison would hopefully inspire the roots tourist to add their own experiences to the digital space after they have engaged with the event.

Furthermore, participatory heritage makes participation by a greater number of people possible. Those with knowledge of the event who may not be directly affiliated with the sponsoring organization or designated as roots tourists would also be able to participate. I am thinking of the many people that surround tourism events that are not directly taking part in the encounter. Their stories could potentially expand the meaning making for everyone involved. Examples of this, using my first case study, could be: parents of the young women on the trip that did not come with them to Brazil; employees of YourWorld Travel that were instrumental in the logistics but did not engage with either tourists or hosts; or, extended explanations by the teachers of the workshop day about their art form. In the second case study, potential examples could be: the makers of the clothes that have great meaning to the event; the volunteers that help with the logistics of the *Boa Morte* organization's processions; or, the local towns person that lives next to the headquarters and is a de facto participant in every year's festival (due to proximity).

4.2.2 The ethical questions raised by digital ethnographers

Some the ethical questions raised by digital ethnographers were: how to ensure a multiplicity of voices in the immersive digital environment; what facilitation practices would be necessary to translate cultural material for the uninitiated; and, what key central ideas from the cultural heritage event should be included in the design of the interface?

In order for the digital space to have content, someone has to go get that content in the real world and create the digitally shareable version of it. Similar to the relationship between fieldwork and writing about ethnography, digital ethnographers must gather data, package it, and share it. To

ensure a multiplicity of voices is of great concern when attempting to represent the Other to an ever-growing number of people. Participatory heritage is inherently one-way that assuages this apprehension. In a crowd-sourced knowledge co-creation scenario for the digital space, multiple voices will inherently be a part of that process. Yet, that group will be self-selecting because it will be based on two factors: extreme interest in the heritage event and also comfort level with technical and digital means. What does that translate into for the digital ethnographer? It means that not all necessary voices will come to the digital space of their own volition, some will need to be invited. Digital ethnographers and their cultural producer counterparts will need to go and gather data in the field from participants on both sides the heritage tourism encounter (tourists and hosts).

Once a digital space has the content, digital ethnographers must consider how they're going to translate the material for audiences that have only a cursory understanding of the deep meanings involved. This translation will necessarily be more than language. It will not simply be enough to take text or transcription and place it alongside the same words in another language. What is needed is context. Examples include: the definitions of terminologies used in the field, the explanations of allusions made, the multiplicity of meanings that occur when translating from one language to the other, and the explanation of positionality of the source of any specific information.

The key essential ideas in terms of the design of the interface cannot come from someone outside of the group that is putting on the event. These ideas will become guiding principles and the decisions made for design and functionality. This ethical preoccupation of digital ethnographers translates into the necessity, at least in the earliest stages, to consult with not only a cultural expert, but also a member of the group that are putting on the tourism event. In collaboration these three parties—digital ethnographer as cultural expert, cultural producer as host-representative, and technical experts—constitute the level of combined knowledge and know-how

in order to responsibly represent the heritage event in the digital space. The staged authenticity of a digital space created in this way, with ethics in mind, would serve to increase the emancipatory possible of the live roots tourism event.

4.2.3 The ability for some stories to be self-representation in the digital

Aside from co-created knowledge of participatory heritage and governing ethical questions of digital ethnographers, the emancipatory possible would benefit greatly from first-person accounts. To give power to the marginalized communities that engage in Brazilian roots tourism performance as hosts or as tourists is to allow them to tell their own story in their own terms. The digital space then becomes in an emancipatory space where marginalized individuals can figuratively and literally create worlds by speaking them into existence. These worlds, constructed through personal narrative, would still need to be contextualized in relation to the event itself.

4.2.4 Unequal relationships based on hegemony along with the realization that small gains are possible

The combination of self-representational stories with participatory heritage (as democratic co-creation in the digital) that is curated through the ethical lens of digital ethnography presents the perfect opportunity to contextualize all of the stories in the digital space by adding commentary about hegemonic relationships in small gains made. Basically, what the space of digital storytelling allows for is the painting of more complete pictures related to an event. In tourism, especially because we are discussing performance, the meaning of that digital space and its power (from an emancipatory or utopian standpoint) is entirely dependent upon a tangible connection between the

digital and the real. The liveness of the event in performance is what gives the authenticity to the storytelling in the digital. Because the digital is a space that exists outside of the aliveness of performance, it also becomes a place where dissenting voices can be made a part of the story. This too falls into a category of curating. Who gets to choose what content, what people, what stories? This is very important for the emancipatory possible. But if done correctly, through the inclusion of participatory heritage content that explains the history of marginalization of those involved in the heritage event, the complicated story being told could work in concert with the world making of performance. Additionally, these self-representation stories could also have elements of how hegemonic relationships have affected the person's life and what they consider small gains to be. These are elements that only the digital could bring to an event. Because it is heritage performance, the inclusion of all of these voices (during the event) could change the event in a manner that maybe detrimental. Especially in instances of tourism, too much self-reflexivity and identification of factors that keep marginalize people marginalized, could lessen the factors that tourists find inviting. Even roots tourists that are looking for "the real" in the tourism they are participating in or consuming, must have a good time as they engage with it. Without that "good time" enjoyability factor, no emancipatory possible is possible.

4.2.5 Creation of new knowledge about self, Society, and Others

Finally, with regard to the emancipatory possible, if the roots tourist adds their own story to the digital space this will increase the self-knowledge they are looking for in the first place. In earlier chapters, I have mentioned the questioning that roots tourists encounter as a result of their participation in performance or as a result of alienation that might occur due to their encounter with difference and Others. In terms of Afro-descendant roots tourism in Brazil, the questions

were: what is Africa to me; and, what is my home country to me? These questions and the necessary self-reflection and order to answer them could manifest themselves internally as well as externally. Not all roots tourists are going to be interested in this. But for some, it will be the perfect opportunity to capitalize on emancipatory possibilities as a result of engaging in a roots tourism performance. It would be in having to articulate their thoughts and feelings and then having that articulation be translated from the real to the digital, that could affect change in a person's life. Even if it is creation of new knowledge about self, Society and Others that is raw and inarticulate or even inaccurate, the truth of feelings expressed, would render any in articulations or inaccuracies less important.

4.3 QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DIGITAL AND ETHICS (THROUGH THE WORK OF SOYINI MADISON)

In *Critical Ethnography*, Soyini Madison marshals the work of Maria Lugones in order to advocate for loving perception as ethnographers go about their work. Madison asserts that Lugones is promoting her concept of “world traveling” as a means to identify with Others, thereby perceiving them lovingly.²⁸⁹ World traveling, as per Lugones, is akin to “code switching.” Code switching is the shifting of codes as individuals travel from one world to another. Code switching is usually the purview and necessity of outsiders or minoritarian subjects. The worlds being traveled, flesh and blood people engaging with any construction of a particular society, can be small or large. Those on the margins of society code switching is not deception but necessity in

²⁸⁹ Madison. *Critical Ethnography*. 99-107.

order to gain access to civility, respect, health, or even safety. Marginalized people code switch in order to use space and language in particular ways employing gestures, patterns of speech, and intentions that are specific to the particular world they are engaging with. Madison points out that code switching, or world traveling, is a natural part of human interaction in diverse social worlds where authority and power operate in multicenter locations. We all code switch and world travel. The difference between majoritarian and my minoritarian subjects is that the latter has to code switch with more skill and effort as they cross between two different worlds. The more different you are the better world traveler you need to be.

Madison uses Lugones' construction of world traveling to point out uses of this theory for the ethical considerations of the critical ethnographer. Madison explains that this should be an ongoing concern. For Madison, understanding the negotiations made by outsiders or non-mainstream individuals can be of great benefit to the approach of fieldwork and subsequent writing or performance. Madison takes Maria Lugones' feminist philosophy based on the experiences of women of color in United States and extrapolates strategies that ethnographic field workers could employ. From those strategies of traveling to other worlds, I wish to point out what the ethnographer's approach should consider in the digital, and also how these considerations can become categories that help identify and articulate how marginalize people are in the world.

Ways of being and knowing of marginalized people are what some critical ethnographers are attempting to unearth or examine. This specific aspect of how marginalized people travel between worlds is an excellent way to highlight their experience in the world. Beyond ethical considerations, attempting to find how world traveling takes place by the specific individuals whose stories are being translated into the digital, can be what they are encouraged to share.

The specific world traveling considerations that Madison points out are: code switching skills, stereotypes, playfulness, and foolish play. Digital ethnographers and digital storytellers can gather this information about individuals that encounter each other through performance in tourism scenarios. It could be asked of the hosts of Brazilian roots tourism performance: how do they code switch? When shifting from their identity of everyday life to their identity as it presents are of heritage performance, what negotiations are they making and why? As far as stereotypes, roots tourism hosts could be asked in their storytelling to highlight what stereotypes they feel they are perceived as and what stereotypes they encounter as they go about the work of presenting heritage? Playfulness and foolish play have to do with conventions and norms. The digital could benefit from having the opinions within stories about what heritage tourism hosts expect as far as participation. What to do and what not to do should be dictated by the local presenters. As the digital becomes a space that is filled with the multitude of voices and experiences, these can include anecdotes of playfulness and foolish play. I see the relationship between the two as analogous to best practices and pitfalls. Playfulness and its converse unplayfulness is the sensitivity to be able to know how your participation takes place; when it is acceptable to explore and make mistakes in the Other, and when it is time to be serious. Foolish play is disrespecting the boundaries of cultural norms, privacy, and civility. These aspects of world traveling all lead to what Madison (through Maria Lugones) espouses as loving perception. Madison argues that loving perception evokes dialogic performance and also sustains it. It shouldn't be "sappy" and it shouldn't romanticize. This approach could help the digital, the stories that will become the content shared in digital storytelling space, to be one where there is always recognition of the Other.

5.0 CONCLUSÃO (CONCLUSION)

An essentialized “nurturing spirit” in Black people is given the name of (the myth of) Mama Africa and uncritically discussed among tourists and the companies that promote tourism to them. The reasons are: 1) they may not have the critical language to explain the spiritual connection (complicated by history’s contradictions); and/or, 2) the “nurturing spirit” may be different from how it is described. Namely, an authentic and essentialized notion of African-ness within each Black person everywhere. Yet evidence suggests that many Black people, including roots tourists, recognize the inequalities they are faced with. In fact, it is these inequalities that often drive them towards a heritage tourism (or roots tourism) encounter. Colloquial notions and means of expression often *include more* than textual and language-based understandings allow for. The inclusion of the repertoire, through lived experience and corporeal/kinesthetic participation, supports the idea that a tourist’s connection to Mama Africa is more complicated than simply connecting with the African continent (in an imagined and essentialized way).

The “nurturing spirit” referenced by tourists may be sought after in order to redress “double consciousness” and “nervous conditions.” For the trans(post)colonial subject there is a *need* to remedy these conditions of racial trauma. One way that remedy is available is through performances within tourism encounters and emancipatory practices that yield possibility. So, then, in a specific situation where frame and context shift slightly with wiggle room, Mama Africa may be a myth, but the consequences of engaging with her through transnational travel and bodily involvement in performance make the effects of that mythology very real.

The myth of Mama Africa and the palpable effects that performance elicits, exist not as an uncritical assumption of an essentialized notion of a false inherent Black-ness (that imagines all

Black people as a homogenous group), but rather serves as an example of a utopian practice of creating the world around you differently. Transnational networks that expand across hemispheric geographies and the Black Atlantic are examples of what the emancipatory possible can heal in the lives of marginalized people. Beyond that, there is the personal growth and sense of self-worth supported by the example of the young women's group that traveled to Bahia (Essence of a Goddess trip) to connect with their own leadership ability and feminine self-worth.

In the encounter with the Other, in the specific scenarios of roots tourism of Brazil, the same questions are asked (in Bahia) as those asked at Elmina Castle in Ghana. The story is different for each location on either side of the Atlantic, but they are part of the same story, causing the Afro-descendant person to question: what is Africa to me? And what is my home country to me? This too, is not an uncritical engagement with global forces of iniquity and local manifestations of violence against Black people. It is an implicit engagement with these topics at the colloquial level. As I mentioned in my introduction, no one in Latin America asks what is cultural agency? And yet, the actions of Latin Americans that engage in cultural agency, through performance, suggest an understanding that culture creates agency. I posit that many aspects of culture can create agency. Not only is agency found in the creation process by artists, but also in the engagement process by audiences. The relationship of the emancipatory possible to this, is that in these tourist scenarios the roots tourist is both creator and audience. They may not be the host of the tourism event, but at the moment of an encounter (in participatory performances of intangible heritage), the tourist is both spectator and actor, they are doing something similar to simming, in their participation as spect-actors. They are practicing what they came to find, engagement.

Not all roots tourists, ethnic tourists, or heritage tourists wish to engage at this level. Yet most roots tourists that seek high levels of staged authenticity in their tourism encounters are

seeking an engagement that is as real as possible. That real often involves moments of tourism encounters that are “before, during, and after.” Additionally, this engagement places the roots tourist in a scenario that is porous. If they are willing, they may enter the event more deeply, by invitation of hosts, or back off if they prefer. This deeper entry, if the emancipatory possible is sought, is a result of framing that includes high levels of contextualization, rapport with the hosts, and knowledge seeking of the marginalization experienced by the Other. In this unique situation of high staged authenticity coupled with earnest and open invitation (and participation) by the roots tourists, contextualized by the communication of the Black struggle locally, transforms the mythology of Mama Africa, into an emancipatory possibility of the world making (exemplified in the networking) of marginalized people.

In my two case studies, the Others are marginalized people of African descent. In the first case study, I was able to participate and observe because I was invited. As a non-Black person I was given access to Black spaces, Black conversations, Black criticism of society, and Black networks of support. The group was able to drop some of the “mask” worn as a result of the double consciousness felt by most Black people in North America. This is the mask alluded to in *Black Skin/ White Masks* of Frantz Fanon. It is part of the assertions made in the *Souls of Black Folks*, in terms of seeing through “the veil” of social racism. It is part of living the “Black Atlantic” as written about by Paul Gilroy.

In the second case study, *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), I was not part of a group. I was not embedded with people traveling to engage in roots tourism. The event itself was part of roots tourism because of its colloquially designated staged authenticity as “highly African” (or high in African content). I traveled alone as I ventured to encounter an event of high-value to Afro-descendant people. The Other I encountered in this case were those around me (whom were

not in a group with me) engaging with the event (some Afro-descendant, some not) and the people inside event (as hosts) --the sisters and their organization (that coordinated the event).

Mama Africa through utopian performances of possibility and emancipatory possible in/with performance becomes more than mythology. Mama Africa becomes “world making” that performance creates the possibility for. Performance makes the wiggle room and in that wiggle room can be found the slight space within which the emancipatory possible is able to have effects on the lives of these roots tourists before, during, and after their tourism encounters. In the cases of Brazilian roots tourism performance, as analyzed in this paper, the world making (through performance) is one that heals the damaging legacies of racism and racial trauma through engagement with music, dance, acting, etc –what Gilroy calls “lower frequency” and I have referred to as “colloquial.”

Thus, as a result, Mama Africa also becomes a shorthand for explaining that some marginalized people, in this case mostly Black people, exist in an unequal and oppositional relationships to the nation-state where they reside. Mama Africa, as an idea embedded in tourism performance, is an acknowledgment of the attempt to make folklore static and the people essentialized that live in Bahia. Yet at the same time, Mama Africa is also an acknowledgment that there exist small foci of reform that will manifest themselves in various ways for roots tourists. Impacting positively how they live and work when they returned home. Not all roots tourists are professors, scholars are artists. The emancipatory possible is not limited by the “frequency” at which roots tourists engage. It is easiest for me and other liberal scholars to see the effects in other middle-class liberal US scholars. Please note that simply because this is a limitation of mine, it does not negate the positive effects it might have for someone who does not work at a university.

It could be manifested in Mrs. Angela Paton as she makes choices for her organization that help young women of color to grow and develop. It could also be manifested in how the mother of one of the young women on the Essence of the Goddess trip, Christina, makes choices on how to raise her daughter, tapping into the power of the experiences both mom and daughter had in Brazil. It could also manifest itself in the dance pedagogy of Sister Faye Walker (also known as Ebunlola Adegbaide) in the spiritual connection to the idea of Africa that she mentioned in my interview with her. All this to say, that colloquial understandings, what scholarship may have deemed to be mythology, has great power in performance. The reason is that story has great power. If performance is world making, and it is, then the ability to create possibilities in your own life by emancipating yourself --as a marginalized subject from modernity/coloniality's subtle (and not so subtle) derogatory effects [even if only slightly], then mama Africa is not a myth at all. It is something else altogether; For many Black people it is the goal. It is the intentional attempt to connect that which has been disconnected. "Knowing" *who you are* and *where you come from* is of far greater value than validation of that personal truth by archival (written) or scholarly works. Brazilian roots tourism is just one way to access this connectivity.

The myth of Mama Africa is therefore *not false*. It is merely *not not true* because it is a feeling. What scholars of Bahian tourism call the mythology of Mama Africa, I call the powerful story of Mama Africa. This story is not negated by the fact that Bahia's identity is a constructed one on the global map of African-ness. This just makes the map more detailed and accurate, because now it is a map of living museums with tourism encounters of non-static folklore, actual museum spaces, and actual non-essentialized human beings. It is the human beings and their story of constructed African-ness in Bahia that is told through the "exhibits" (tourism events) of the "living museum." The complicated Living Museum of Bahia, Brazil should be considered

alongside the architectural museum that is Elmina Castle in Ghana, famous for its “door of no return.” And these two “museums” should be considered alongside Liverpool’s Slavery Museum which is an actual traditional museum space. In yet another example of a Black Atlantic relationship, these museums (traditional [Liverpool] alongside intangible [Bahia] and tangible [Elmina]), are a part of the imagined global map of African-ness that has true and real effects on the lives of those that wish to engage with it. These “museums” are all parts of the same story and each engages with that story --the story of Afro descendent people in the last 400 years-- at different “frequencies” and at different emotional registers.

I have already mentioned that Elmina Castle with its “door of no return,” is a place of pain and sorrow. Scholarship reports that this is a mournful place for roots tourists. The emotions associated with Brazilian roots tourism, specifically that of joy, does not negate the historical truths of the pain and brutality of human chattel slavery. The joy associated with Brazil, experienced by Black people when they go there (as part of their engagement with the global map of African-ness), is because that joy stands in contrast to the pain found at places such as Elmina Castle. Roots tourists seek to be part of that story, many of them even consider a trip to Western Africa (and relevant engagement with tourism encounters there, related to pain and sorrow) as being part of the rites of passage of their life.

The mythology of Mama Africa is not always an attempt to exchange modernity for authenticity. In some cases, such as those highlighted in this dissertation, and as it relates to my arguments, the mythology of Mama Africa is a story that can be entered into, as steeped in historical, critical, and theoretical context as it is porous and spiritually powerful. The mythology of Mama Africa and the essentialized notions associated with it are how Cachoeira, *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death), Salvador, and Bahia in general, promote their tourism industry.

As state sponsored tourism boards forefront African culture, violence and continued economic/social inequality exists for many of the Black people there. Even as this mythology and materiality cannot be negated, it should be acknowledged that the story of Mama Africa, alongside this lived experience, is what is accessed by the roots tourists seeking out and engaging performance there. The emancipatory possible, as it relates to tourism encounters that use performance, results from: the before, during, and after of the roots tourism experience. The emancipatory possible is what drew you there (need), what you did there (participatory performance), what you consumed there (traditional performance), and what that experience allowed you to receive (have transferred to you) and produce in your life going forward (through networks).

I'm not Afro-descendant, nor am I Brazilian, so I cannot identify myself as a roots tourist. Therefore, any emancipatory possible I engaged with and/or am benefiting from after this fieldwork, is different than the Others I was privileged enough to observe and participate with. In order to investigate my own emancipatory possible, which is a natural question that has come to mind (as I did this fieldwork and wrote these pages): what is Latin America to me? What is the USA to me (as a result of the previous question)? To answer these questions, in the future, I look forward to digging in and excavating (through historical, critical, and sociological contexts) as I examine performances of Colombia, my ancestral homeland.

As mentioned in chapter four, the area of digital storytelling in combination with digital ethnography is where the emancipatory possible has some areas of opportunity for growth. Given that it is connected to staged authenticity, the emancipatory possible lives on a spectrum. I see great promise in what digital storytelling is able to do to move the place of tourism generally (and roots tourism in particular) towards the emancipatory and utopian end of the that spectrum.

An associated project to the concepts explored in this dissertation would be to examine the viability of the emancipatory possible as a term (performance derived theoretical construct) that travels. I am curious as to how scholars from other fields might be able to deploy the emancipatory possible in their own arguments. Within tourism, a natural comparative study could be a study of the differences in meaning making and the emancipatory possible of different Afro-diasporic subjects (i.e., Canadians of African descent, Afro-Britons, and/or Afro-Jamaicans) as they visit Bahia, or other roots tourism sites. Another project could be to compare colloquial African-ness (in terms of tourism performance) in Brazil, Colombia, and the Caribbean. That would involve finding the places that people on the street say are “the most African” or “the Blackest,” and examining the performance at those places, contextualized by their historical, regional, and local milieu.

Lastly, I wish to point out that the next level of this work --the development of the emancipatory possible as a theory-- is not only horizontal (in other geographies, or with other Others), but also vertical. To go deeper with emancipatory possible would be to follow the emancipatory possibilities as they grow (in networking). The term itself indicates the existence of a multi-verse of utopian possibilities (that happen to be emancipatory) depending on the subjects (in my case tourists) that choose to engage with it in and through performance. The next step would be to track some of these emancipatory possibilities and the effect they have in real life. The beginning of this work would be documenting the networks between marginalized people and the way in which those networks expand informally. The cataloging of such information could tell us more about the map of African-ness, alongside many of the other maps of varying --‘Ness. But more importantly, it would highlight what other worlds are being created by performances such as those created by a Bahian arts workshop day or the *Festa da Boa Morte* (Festival of Good Death).

One final note on staged authenticity: just because it is staged doesn't make it fake. Similar to cleaning up your house before a guest comes over does not make you fake or your home fake. These matters exist on a spectrum, authenticity is no different than how you present your house. When strangers come over you might clean the public areas only (and not allow guests into private spaces), whereas when family comes over you might do the same cleaning but allow them access to the rest of the house which may not be as put together on that particular day. The stranger that's never been in your home and only sees the living room after it's been freshly vacuumed, is akin to the tourist who goes to Bahia just for fun. Bahia is after all a fun place, with beautiful beaches and gastronomy that is second-to-none. Yet, in this example, when family comes over and sees that some of the rooms are in disarray, the staged authenticity of your home in that moment is higher for that family member.

This corresponds to how roots tourists see Bahia. The emancipatory possible, the wiggle room I have argued for, and the networks and Pan Africanisms possible, are all reliant on the roots tourist (in this metaphor: a member of the family) entering some of the rooms that are in disarray. The threshold to the room, as any introductory-level performance studies student knows, is a liminal space. The threshold for the room is porous, similar to any event having a high level of staged authenticity. The family member can go in as far as they want or stay out altogether. The roots tourist, as the family member, makes a choice with how much they engage with the disarray in the room. If what is found in that room is something that the family member connects with, even in the context of the messiness (of contradictory history and a essentializing mythology), the action of participating with her body in performance can yield generative outcomes. Perhaps the specific

messiness in the disarray of that room encountered by the family member brings about joy in them, giving them ideas about themselves and their own house. I will stop here...²⁹⁰

Thank you for being in this performative writing with me, in the *jogo* (game) of the *roda* (circle) that was this dissertation. Just as in a game of *capoeira* or any movement class, I cannot leave you too warm, we must cool down, so we can reenter the world.

5.1 COOL DOWN FROM THE *JOGO* (GAME)

Here is an excerpt from the song “*Jogo Perigoso*” we looked at together before we started:

*Jogo Perigoso*²⁹¹

mandinga nesse jogo, meu camara

esse jogo e de matar

Olha o jogo perigoso

esse jogo e de matar

Dangerous Game²⁹²

There’s **magic** in this game, my friend

That game is a killer

Watch the dangerous game

That game is a killer

In the days leading up to the completion of this dissertation project, I called one of *Mestre* Acordeon’s students, *Mestre Recruta*.²⁹³ We spoke about the meaning of the lyrics to “*Jogo Perigoso*” and he confirmed my translation of a certain word.²⁹⁴ During that phone conversation

²⁹⁰ I shall not extend the metaphor beyond this for two reasons: 1) I do not wish to beat a dead horse, and 2) in order for that metaphor to line up with this dissertation, both family members would have to be living in very similar (but different homes); have awful landlords that at times brutalize people that look like them; be governed by authorities that seek to quiet them; when they are audacious enough to point out the blatant inequality of the hegemonic relationships they have been born into (as a result of skin color or ethnic identification with African-ness) they get asked: “why are you complaining so much?”

²⁹¹ Mestre Acordeon. 2009. “*Jogo Perigoso*.” CD: *Eh Capoeira*. California: Panda Digital. Track 12.

²⁹² Translated by Diego Villada

²⁹³ *Mestre Recruta* is the *capoeira* moniker of Chris Montiel.

²⁹⁴ Personal Interview. 09 March 2018.

he expressed to me that in *capoeira* the circle “is everything,” and what happens in the circle (the *jogo*) is everything. It is physical training, but it is also philosophy; it is practice for everyday life, dealing with challenges presented for you. He said, that for him and his students, *capoeira* was liberation and liberating. The best way he could describe this was to correct/expand my translation of the word *mandinga*. While it means “magic,” it also means: fortitude, deep connection, roots, powerful. He described *mandinga* as the driving life force in *capoeira*, similar to *chi* or *ki* in East Asian martial disciplines. *Mandinga* being the magic (+ fortitude, deep connection, roots, and power) of *capoeira*’s movement, music, and circle is a metaphor for the emancipatory possible in Brazilian roots tourism. The tourism is the circle and if marginalized people, specifically Afro-descendant roots tourism, engage *inside* the circle with as much *mandinga* (magic; life force) as they can, then the circle can help them challenge (in small ways) their condition(s) *outside* of the circle, in the dangerous game. The emancipatory possible is the *mandinga* of roots tourism.

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